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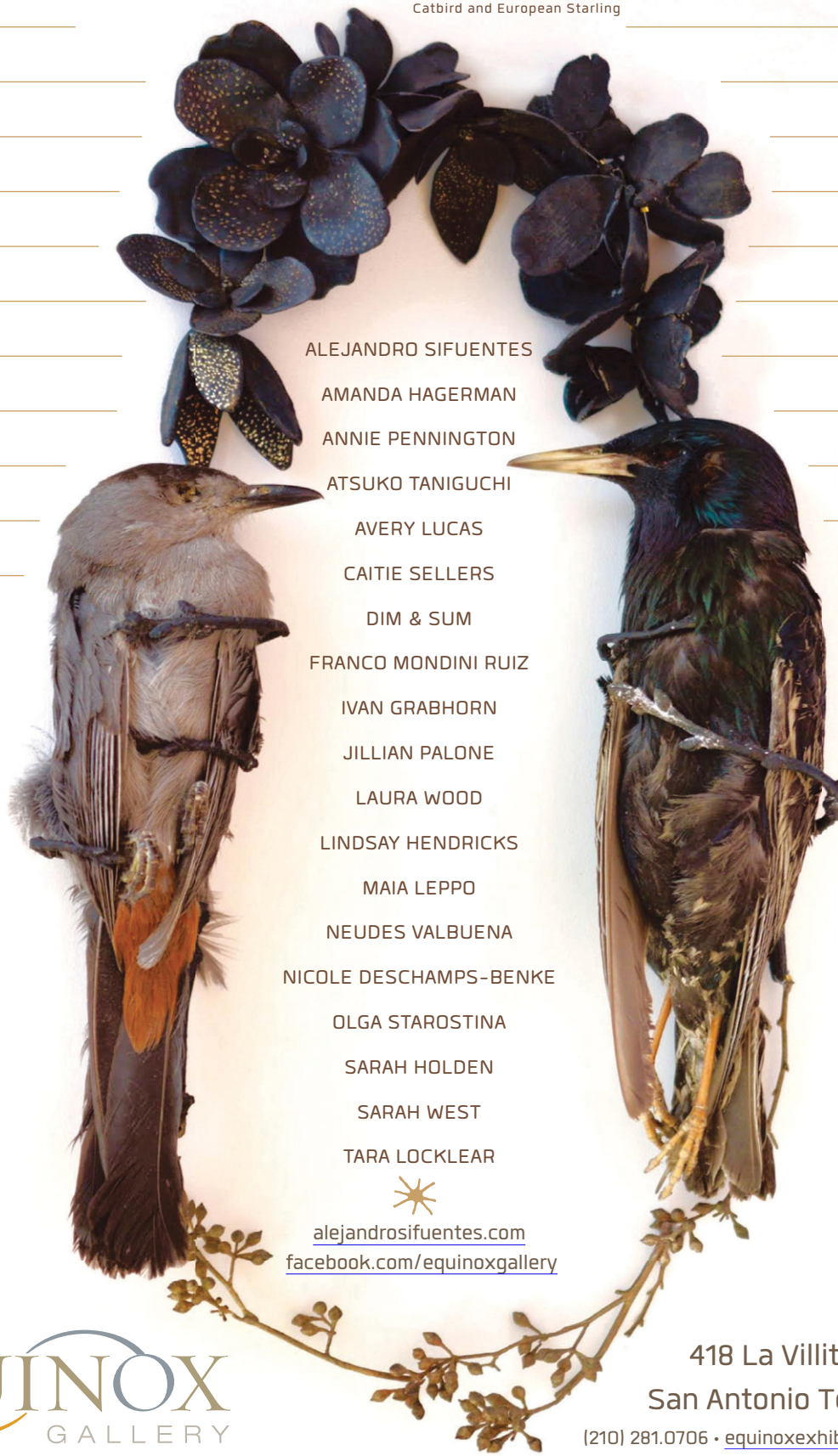

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necklace
photo: sanna lindberg

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THIS ISSUE OF *METALSMITH* could easily be dubbed the "Women in Metal" edition, as all four feature articles and nearly all of the departments have women as their focus.

While this may seem editorially slanted, it actually coincides with the demographics in the field; a recent survey of the SNAG membership revealed that it is at least three quarters female.

Of course, this was not always the case. Until just a century ago, women were either absent or invisible from the jewelry profession. The emergence of female metalsmiths onto the cultural scene is the subject of the article "Striking Out: The First Women Studio Jewelers." Author Elyse Zorn Karlin traces the rise of women practitioners in the wake of the Arts & Crafts movement, which allowed for greater artistic access and participation. The talented figures who arose at this pivotal stage paved the way for the contributions of future generations.

Fast forward a few decades and we find a bounty of creativity by female metalsmiths. Indeed, our article on furniture designer Vivian Beer likens her to a superhero, given her great strength, vitality, and rapid-fire mind. These qualities translate directly into sculptural designs that defy not only the laws of gravity, but also our expectations of what metal and furniture can do.

Equally supreme are the excruciatingly labor-intensive works by Mirjam Hiller, showcased here. Large ethereal brooches like *Moth* (2014) required countless hours of precision cutting and piercing stainless steel by hand. Cover artist Hanna Hedman is just as unrelenting and "aggressive" in shaping metal into her 21st-century talismans. Hedman's jewelry reflects an ever-expanding quest to embrace the world in its dichotomous splendor.

All of the women makers profiled in this issue enjoy a fearlessness and sense of adventure. Undaunted and unstoppable, they prove a match for any material or experience that comes their way.

SUZANNE RAMLJAK
EDITOR

The mission of *Metalsmith* magazine is to document, analyze, and promote excellence in jewelry and metalsmithing. In fulfillment of the goal of producing a significant document of the field, editorial content will emphasize contemporary activities and ideas, with supportive content to include relevant historical work and critical issues.

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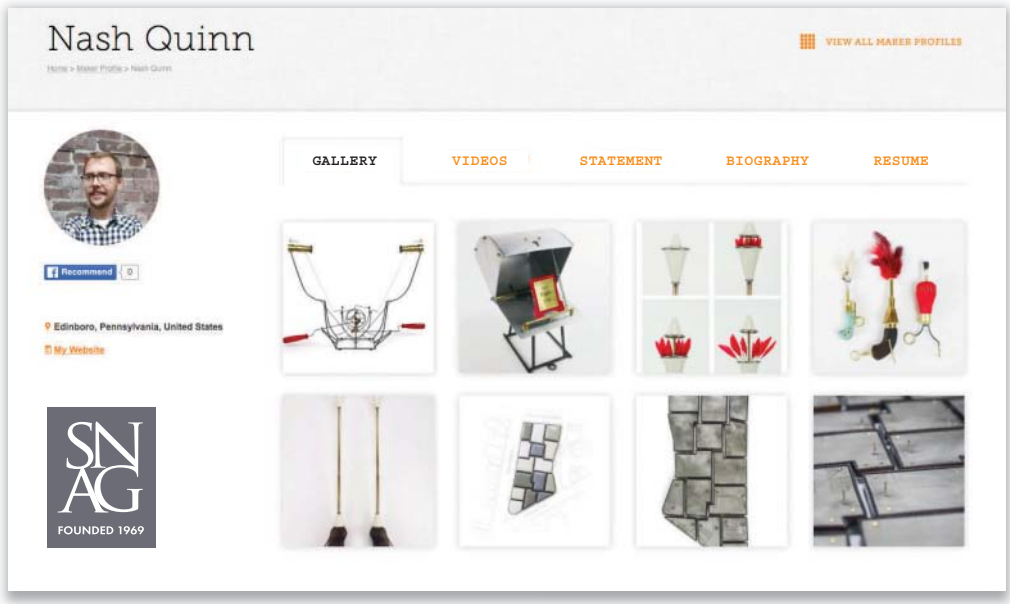
Michael Good, *Double Cuff Bracelet*, 18 kt. gold; George Sawyer, *Bloom, Brooch/Pendant*, 18 kt. yellow gold, 14 kt. red gold, fine silver and patinated copper with an orange spinel and diamonds. Photo: Allen Brown.

SNAG Maker Profiles



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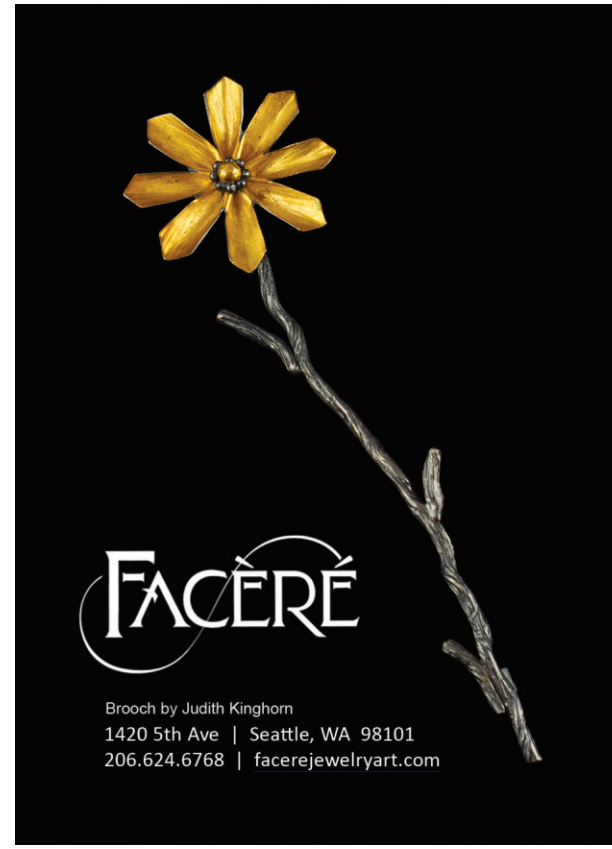

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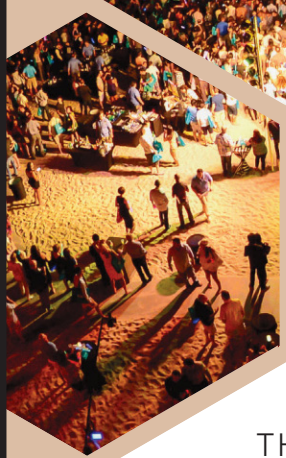

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Photography courtesy of Jim Bove.

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Petal Bracelet: iron, 22k, 18k, 18k palladium white, diamonds. Image: Hap Sakwa

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Boris Bally

BY MICHAEL MCMILLAN

Boris Bally in his Providence, Rhode Island, studio

Corner view of Bally's studio with suspended *Transit Chairs*

AS AN ARTIST personally invested in urban renewal and the fostering of community relationships, Boris Bally has a Rhode Island studio tailor-made for his practice and personal aspirations. His studio in West Providence's Olneyville neighborhood, where he works alongside metalsmith and apprentice Rob Boyd, is a professional yet unpretentious environment that mirrors the spirit of his creative endeavors. Bally is renowned for the manipulation of public signage, and his repurposing of "urban enamels" is accomplished in the studio equivalent of a New York City deli, an egalitarian space where those in suits and sweatpants can talk, learn, and feel comfortable side by side. Bally's accomplishments over the last 30 years illustrate a passion for tapping into the resources and collective enthusiasm of his surroundings; the community is always welcome to step through his door.

Bally's sheetrock, granite, and brick studio rests in the soil of a New England city rich in both jewelry and metalsmithing history. While 19th-century companies such as Gorham Manufacturing were producing flatware and repouseé chalices in Providence, nearly 200 years later Bally is continuing the craft tradition through his ingenious "humanufacturing" of furniture and other objects of utility. As a formally trained goldsmith—and dealmaker of the highest caliber—the artist negotiates with public and private sources to purchase ever-changing inventories of used traffic signage for his imaginative creations. This self-described "civic material" adorns Bally's Atwells Avenue workspace, as well as his family's former residence on the second floor, now an artist residence. These thematically accessible, industrial commodities have won over a diversity of audiences through their artful repurposing. "One thing I adore about this medium is that it appeals to anybody, any cross-section," Bally states. His works are displayed in settings such as museums, restaurants, art galleries, outdoor public venues, and hospitals.

"My idea of craft encompasses the community," Bally notes, as his studio is part classroom, part entertainment venue, and a full measure of workshop wonder.

Long before crafting these works in his dream studio, Bally built a foundation in metalsmithing. He grew up in the industrial city of Pittsburgh, then graduated from Carnegie Mellon University with a degree in art. His studies led him to Switzerland, as well as to Philadelphia's Tyler School of Art. While repurposing municipal metals has long been a staple of his practice, much of Bally's work in the '80s and '90s focused on cups, brooches, silver and brass vessels, menorahs, candlesticks, and utensils. Furthermore, the artist's politically charged narratives have included the use of guns and gun triggers (as in his recent *Loaded Menorah*). Today, Bally's partnership with the Rhode Island Coalition Against Violence reflects his long-held desire to address the brutality seen in communities across this country.

Bally's move to Providence in the late 1990s with his wife Lynn Taylor, a primary care physician and noted expert in HIV and viral hepatitis, was a difficult yet fitting opportunity to immerse himself in social realities. After driving past the decades-vacant Ryan Post American Legion building in 1998, Bally purchased the lot for $30,000 and fought his way through an arduous battle with contractors, DIY renovation, and building codes. These tiresome efforts eventually led to the formal ribbon-cutting ceremony in April of the following year.

"My idea of craft encompasses the community," Bally notes, as his studio is part classroom, part entertainment venue, and a full measure of workshop wonder. As he opens the studio for tours, benefit auctions, and educational opportunities (such as visits from Rhode Island School of Design students), Bally has a workplace that functions as a lively meeting hall.

"Boris and I have a great symbiosis," says apprentice Rob Boyd. "I get to work every day with a friend who respects and appreciates my ideas and creativity." Boyd first met Bally as a metalsmithing student at Rhode Island College, an experience that eventually led to their six-year partnership. The two have a "finish-each-other's-sentences" dynamic. Whether it is measuring angles on the brake press, discussing inventory, or evaluating construction alignments, they work together seamlessly. In instructing students and new apprentices, both Bally and Boyd promote a strong work ethic, patience for the handmade, and a rich appreciation of craft tradition. Bally is especially cognizant of the last of these, as he reflects: "Sometimes the new generation forgets that certain skills have brought us to this point, and I worry that the culture will be devoid of actually knowing how to make things."

Bally's recent *Ransom* project is a collage of 100 brooches inspired by the late Australian collage artist Rosalie Gascoigne and infamous Sex Pistols graphic designer Jamie Reid. Each of the brooches was sold to a body of artists, collectors, curators, dealers, and professors. Recipients were required to take "selfies" while donning the pieces, images that were later compiled and presented as a formal composition. As Bally notes, these brooches act in effect as the "glue" to bring together the enthusiasm of the craft and metal communities. While the joy of a Bally studio visit can only be appreciated in person, collaborative efforts such as this are a fitting substitute to capture the passion of the artist's workplace.

Bally's studio practice has expanded both conceptually and geographically. Last year, Bally and Boyd worked with a Maryland gallery on *Fission 999,* a 40-foot-high installation for the parking garage of real estate firm Danac, LLC in Gaithersburg, Maryland. On a recent trip to the Derry region of Northern Ireland, a combination of residency efforts, lectures, and master classes inspired Bally to create the *Derry Stool,* conceived in conjunction with CultureCraft, an ongoing project that cultivates craft practice in the city. A percentage of sales from Bally's *Ransom* brooches and the resulting *Derry Stools* have been donated to SNAG and CultureCraft, respectively. Everything comes full circle.

"I lived in a three-story apartment building, walked up to the third floor with my torch tanks, and swore that someday I would have whatever I wanted, whatever I needed in my studio, and not have to hide what I did," Bally recalls of his early career in Boston. While the life of a contemporary metalsmith or jeweler may be viewed as a romantic privilege to the uninitiated, Bally's labor-intensive work is embraced as a vocation, and one that is communicated best in the studio. "One thing I like about opening my space to the community is that one way or another, everybody will leave here with something of value," he expresses. Bally's passionate and innovative spirit will aid him in the studio and the community for years to come.

Michael McMillan is associate curator at Fuller Craft Museum in Brockton, Massachusetts.

Derry Stools, 2014
reclycled aluminum traffic signs, stainless steel hardware
height 30 ½"
PHOTO: AARON USHER III

Ransom Project (100 brooches), 2015
recycled aluminum traffic signs
each 2 ⅜ x 2 ⅜ x ½"
PHOTO: STEVE MASON

Furthermore:
www.borisbally.com

Tara Locklear
An Urban Vibe

BY ANDREA DINOTO

YES, JEWELRY CAN be made from just about anything, but busted-up skateboards? It's an idea that boggles the mind until Tara Locklear begins to deconstruct her weirdly intriguing material of choice. A skateboard is made from seven layers of predyed maple veneer, she explains, and its graphic surface, when well worn by youthful, sneaker-clad feet, displays "a natural patina." Locklear goes on to describe skateboards as "contemporary reliquaries" of youth culture, and as such they perfectly express the freewheeling, urban-industrial vibe she seeks in jewelry making. She also uses cement and steel to create bold and colorful work, all of which puts a conceptual spin on costume jewelry. Chunks of skateboard become "PopRoxx," i.e., faceted "gems" ("Lightweight!" she emphasizes) hewn with carpenter's tools, while globs of concrete splashed with gold are turned into gritty rings that wink at so-called cocktail rings. For an upcoming collection that references industrial signage, kitchenware, and such, she's experimenting with enameling on mild steel—purchased from Home Depot.

Locklear, who lives and works in Raleigh, North Carolina, came to jewelry after a career as a restaurant general manager and event planner. Finding corporate work unrewarding, she returned to school, earning a BFA from East Carolina University in 2012. Her course of study included a class in contemporary design in which she learned to cut metal. "It wasn't that hard," she says, "and it was fun. I could fabricate all these amazing things myself." One of her professors, the redoubtable art jewelry pioneer Robert Ebendorf, pushed her to further explore industrial and urban materials. "I thought up cement myself," she says, having watched it pour out of trucks during her walks around the city. "I talked about it with Bob, and he put me in touch with Jim Cotter, an artist who'd been working with it for 30 years." Cotter became a mentor, and both he and Ebendorf, she says, "pushed me to do anything."

While in school, Locklear worked as manager of the Cape Fear Tattoo Studio in Greenville. As she recalls: "All my friends rode skateboards, and there was a skate shop two doors down." Skateboarding came

Tara Locklear (left) with client in her booth at Craft Boston, 2015

LSR: Studded Pin, 2012
maple hard wood, vintage mapping pins, sterling silver, stainless steel, pigment
3 ½ x 2 x ¼"

Concrete Costume Cluster (double finger ring), 2011
concrete, gold leaf
2 x 2 x 1 ¼"

"I've worked hard branding and developing ideas and designs," she says.

to represent for her "a lifestyle of freedom and self expression," the very elements Locklear was searching for in her own chosen field. With their graphic surfaces and layered construction (Locklear views their layers as layers of content; "so many cultures within a culture"), skateboards presented themselves as the material she was looking for. "I asked for parts of broken boards," she says, "and took the time to cut them up and make gems: emerald cut, round cut, brilliant." In forming class she made a copper crown set with skateboard gems. At that moment, she says, "they took on their own life."

Now confident in her material choices, Locklear began to produce a body of work with the intention of becoming a full-time, self-supporting jewelry artist. With the help of fellow artist Amy Tavern, Locklear developed a three-year business plan. Phase one was "winging it," in which she applied to every conceivable exhibition and craft show. She quickly earned a SNAG emerging artist invitation to participate in the 2012 American Craft Council's Baltimore show, taking out a loan to pay for her booth. "I loved it immediately," she says; "the interaction and response from customers, real conversations in a non-academic setting." Phase two of her plan has involved teaching workshops and giving lectures, with the goal of educating people about the contemporary jewelry field. The experience, she says, gives her the same joy as doing shows, whether she is teaching in community centers or at venues like the Penland School of Crafts in her native state, or New York's Pratt School of Design. Establishing an online and social media presence has been the ongoing effort in phase three of her plan. "I've worked hard branding and developing ideas and designs," she says, adding that it's important to "get to a very cohesive place with online photography, social media, and packaging."

Locklear's financial business model is based on income from craft shows, workshops, and galleries (she's acquired several), and though she admits the first two years have been a struggle, she is now seeing a larger return, "attributed solely," she says, "to being consistent and keeping the door open. And it's important," she adds, "to always come to work when you work for yourself." Locklear's gallery exhibitions have included participation in Velvet Da Vinci's 2013 "Irreverent Interpretation" show and, in 2015, the "Hex" collaborative collection presented by Reinstein-Ross in New York. In 2015, she was one of eight contemporary jewelers selected for the American Craft Council's pavilion at the 2015 JA New York summer show, held at the Javits Center. Locklear was interested to see "the world of jewelry," diamonds and all, firsthand, viewing it as a learning opportunity, but not one that would necessarily influence her own design. Instead, she felt confirmed in her own voice and materiality. "But it helped me to understand," she says, "that there's jewelry for everybody."

Gem Chains, 2014
broken skateboards, sterling silver, CZ, pigment
length 18–28"

Andrea DiNoto writes about art, craft, and design.

Furthermore:
www.taralocklear.com

Asheville, North Carolina

BY MARTHE LE VAN

ASHEVILLE IS NO longer whispered about as "the next" cool city. Its coolness is fully formed and the secret is most certainly out. Swaddled by the Blue Ridge Mountains, this historic town with fewer than 100,000 residents is widely acclaimed for its creative community and independent spirit. A century after its initial heyday as a tourist destination and health resort, a revitalized Asheville has been bombarded with media accolades, proclaiming it a "best" destination for living and visiting, drinking and food, music and romance, and even for pets. Amid this frenzy of attention, however, one category seems to have slipped from Asheville's national profile: that of its status as an epicenter of American craft.

Before trains, planes, and automobiles brought easy travel, the Blue Ridge Mountains were difficult to navigate. The communities that settled in this area had to be self-sufficient, and make much of what they needed by hand. The discovery and exploitation of these local handcrafts during the Craft Revival movement (1890–1940) are integral to Asheville's history.

Frances Goodrich arrived in North Carolina in 1890 to be a missionary for the Presbyterian Church, but her trajectory soon changed. To assist mountain families, Goodrich founded Allanstand Cottage Industries in 1897, which grew into Allanstand Craft Shop and moved to downtown Asheville in 1908. Goodrich and other leaders of the Southern Arts and Crafts movement gathered at the Penland School of

One category seems to have slipped from Asheville's national profile: that of its status as an epicenter of American craft.

Crafts in 1928, and out of this meeting grew the idea for a regional guild. The Southern Highland Craft Guild was formed in 1930 to unite the craftspeople of nine southeastern states and serve them by offering resources, education, marketing, and conservation. The guild is still going strong today. Three of its six shops—Allanstand Craft Shop, Southern Highland Craft Gallery, and Guild Crafts—are located in Asheville, and twice a year the Guild produces the Craft Fair of the Southern Highlands.

Many know Asheville for only one thing: the Biltmore Estate. Built at the height of the Gilded Age as a summer home for George Washington Vanderbilt and completed in 1895, the Biltmore Estate attracts almost one million visitors annually. Architect Richard Morris Hunt drew inspiration from French Renaissance chateaus for the 178,926-square-foot house, and Frederick Law Olmsted was the landscape architect of the 8,000-acre estate. Vanderbilt heirs lived at the estate until 1965, when the property was converted into a museum. It is the largest privately owned house in the United States and one of Asheville's major employers. The Biltmore Settlement (now Biltmore Village) was an early example of a planned, mixed-use community offering residential, retail, and recreational spaces for estate workers.

In 1901 George and Edith Vanderbilt partnered with Charlotte L. Yale and Eleanor

Pewter workshop at Penland School, ca. 1935–45
IMAGE USED WITH PERMISSION OF HUNTER LIBRARY DIGITAL COLLECTIONS AT WESTERN CAROLINA UNIVERSITY AND THE SOUTHERN HIGHLAND CRAFT GUILD

Jewelry studios at Haywood Community College, Clyde, NC

Façade of the Biltmore Estate, Asheville, NC
PHOTO: THE BILTMORE COMPANY

Vance to establish Biltmore Estate Industries. Its mission was to provide area youth with fine craft training so they could contribute to society. The program was a success and its products, especially weaving, ceramics, and wood, became highly sought. To keep up with demand, the Vanderbilts sold the growing venture to Fred L. Seely, who is best known for supervising the construction of and operating the Grove Park Inn. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, The Grove Park Inn is an outstanding example of the Arts and Crafts style. The grand resort opened in 1913 and was outfitted in furnishings by Roycrofters, the designers and manufacturers of Arts and Crafts furniture, metalwork, and accessories. Significant pieces are on view throughout the resort, and each year it hosts the National Arts & Crafts Conference and Show.

Fifty miles northeast of Asheville, in bucolic Mitchell County, sits the Penland School of Crafts. Penland was founded in 1929 by Lucy Morgan as a craft-based economic development project. "Miss Lucy" aspired to help rural women generate sustainable income through weaving. The program was a success, leading to more studio classrooms, more courses of study, and wide recognition for its craft-based education. In 1962, the American Studio Craft Movement had taken hold, and a new director gave Penland the boost it needed at the time it needed it most. Bill Brown, a metal sculptor and blacksmith, aggressively expanded the studios and courses, added residencies and concentrations, and recruited leading makers to teach at the school. Brown's tenure lasted 21 years, during which he laid the foundation for Penland to become the venerable institution it is today.

More than 1,000 students make the journey to Penland each year. There are more than a dozen state-of-the-art studios available. Guest instructors teach beginning to advanced workshops that last between one and eight weeks. The Penland Gallery hosts both curated exhibitions and a retail store. The community in and around Penland is rich with makers who, after spending time at the school, decided to put down roots in the area.

Black Mountain College (1933–1957) was founded on the premise that the arts weren't just an important part of a well-rounded

STEWART NYE
Dogwood Pattern Jewelry, ca. 1960–79
sterling silver
brooch: 2 ½ x 1"
IMAGE USED WITH PERMISSION OF HUNTER LIBRARY DIGITAL COLLECTIONS AT WESTERN CAROLINA UNIVERSITY AND THE SOUTHERN HIGHLAND CRAFT GUILD

HOSS HALEY
Pack Square Pergola, 2009
steel
length 120'
PHOTO: KEN PITTS STUDIO

education, they were the key to it. Black Mountain College's faculty reads like a "who's who" of the mid-20th-century avant garde. Josef and Anni Albers, John Cage, Merce Cunningham, Willem de Kooning, Buckminster Fuller, Walter Gropius, Franz Kline, and Robert Motherwell all taught there, as did metal sculptors Ruth Asawa, Mary Callery, Richard Lippold, and Kenneth Snelson.

Though Black Mountain College was short lived, its influence on progressive, interdisciplinary education is immeasurable. The Black Mountain College Museum + Art Center in downtown Asheville was founded in 1993 to document its history, spread awareness, and celebrate the ideals of the college through scholarship, exhibitions, and public programs.

Haywood Community College is 25 miles due west of Asheville in the city of Clyde, North Carolina. Its Professional Craft Program offers a two-year degree in jewelry, ceramics, textiles, and wood. Through an intensive course of study (in a new 40,000-square-foot, LEED-certified green facility) students learn both technical skills and those needed to make a living in the craft economy. Haywood Community College is the only institution in the immediate area offering a degree program in jewelry, and it also runs a lively continuing education program.

The Center for Craft, Creativity & Design (CCCD) moved to Asheville in 2013. The mission of CCCD includes an ambitious agenda of craft scholarship, exhibition, education, and endowment. Through high-quality, progressive programming, CCCD has quickly engaged Asheville's art community and fueled the critical dialogue of why craft is important now. Each year CCCD awards 10 Windgate Fellowships of $15,000 to graduating seniors with exceptional skill in craft. In addition, the Windgate Museum Internship Program places four promising curators within major institutions; and Craft Research Grants fund a variety of projects pertinent to craft theory and history.

Opening for "Made in Western North Carolina" exhibition at Center for Craft, Creativity and Design, 2015
PHOTO: JENNIFER COLE RODRIGUEZ

Most North Carolina metalworkers during the time of the Craft Revival were practical blacksmiths, making functional tools and weaponry rather than decorative art, but some found a market for candlesticks, cookware, and religious ornaments. One of the earliest studio jewelers to set up shop in Asheville was Stuart Nye. His forged cuffs and floral jewelry have been produced continuously since 1933.

Regional craft schools gave many contemporary jewelers and metalsmiths their first look at Asheville, and the area's high quality of life, low cost of living, like-minded citizenry, and natural beauty convinced many to stay. Unlike the ceramic or glass art communities, however, this migration didn't really result in enough of a critical mass of metal artists at a single time for anyone to take notice. In the past couple of years, however, the numbers have risen and the community is solidifying into something special.

Asheville's now-bustling downtown owes much to John Cram, an art-loving serial entrepreneur with an impressive list of accomplishments. In 1972, Cram founded New Morning Gallery in historic Biltmore Village to sell made-in-America crafts. Soon after he organized The Village Art & Craft Fair, which has been held on the grounds of the Cathedral of All Souls in Biltmore Village for the past 43 years. "Art to Wear" boutique Bellagio debuted in 1991 to sell handmade jewelry and clothing. Never one to rest on his laurels, that year John Cram ventured out of the retail comfort of Biltmore Village and into the neglected city center to open the fine art gallery Blue Spiral 1. This bold move was the spark that set off downtown Asheville's revitalization.

Dirck Cruiser's *Energy Loop* was installed as the city's first public sculpture in 1983. Albert Paley's *Passage* (1995) stands in front of the National Centers for Environmental Information, a federal building downtown. In 2009, Asheville sculptor Hoss Haley installed two major public art pieces, *Pack Square Fountain* and *Pack Square Pergola,* in the city center. The "Urban Trail" is a walking tour of downtown Asheville's public art collection and includes more than 30 sculptures, most marking historic events and depicting notable people of the city.

It's a good bet that you can buy a piece of handmade jewelry by a local artist on any block in downtown Asheville.

It's a good bet that you can buy a piece of handmade jewelry by a local artist on any block in downtown Asheville. Single-maker stores, artist-run cooperatives, designer galleries, indie boutiques, street fairs—whatever your pleasure, Asheville delivers. The concentration of independent merchants bringing artisanal goods to market is impressive, but also threatened. Corporate sights are aimed squarely at Asheville's central business district, threatening to develop it into Everytown, USA. But that hasn't happened just yet, and maybe, just maybe, the city can hold on to its uncommon charm.

Marthe Le Van is owner and curator of Mora in Asheville and a contemporary jewelry author and evangelist.

ALBERT PALEY
Passage, 1995
steel
37 x 23 x 16'
PHOTO: PALEY STUDIOS, LTD.

Don't Be Boring

BY JILLIAN MOORE

MY EYEBALLS ARE just fed up with and sick to death of too much dour jewelry. I know metalsmiths aren't all sourpusses, so why is there so much pinch-faced, minimalist asceticism out there? I'm afraid that, in our communal efforts to cement the legitimacy of our field, things have taken a turn for the self-serious.

I'm tired of meta-jewelry. I'm tired of lazy invocations of Victoriana. I'm tired of jewelry that makes me feel like I have to whisper in its presence. I'm just not very good at hushed tones and false solemnity.

When I step away from my bench to see what everyone else has been up to, I want to know they're having as much fun as I am. I feel connected to objects that reflect humor, sensuality, and joy because I understand the impulse that created them. I want to feel jealous of the pleasure in their making. That particular shiver, generated by the friction of satisfaction and envy, drives me back to my practice with a renewed sense of urgency.

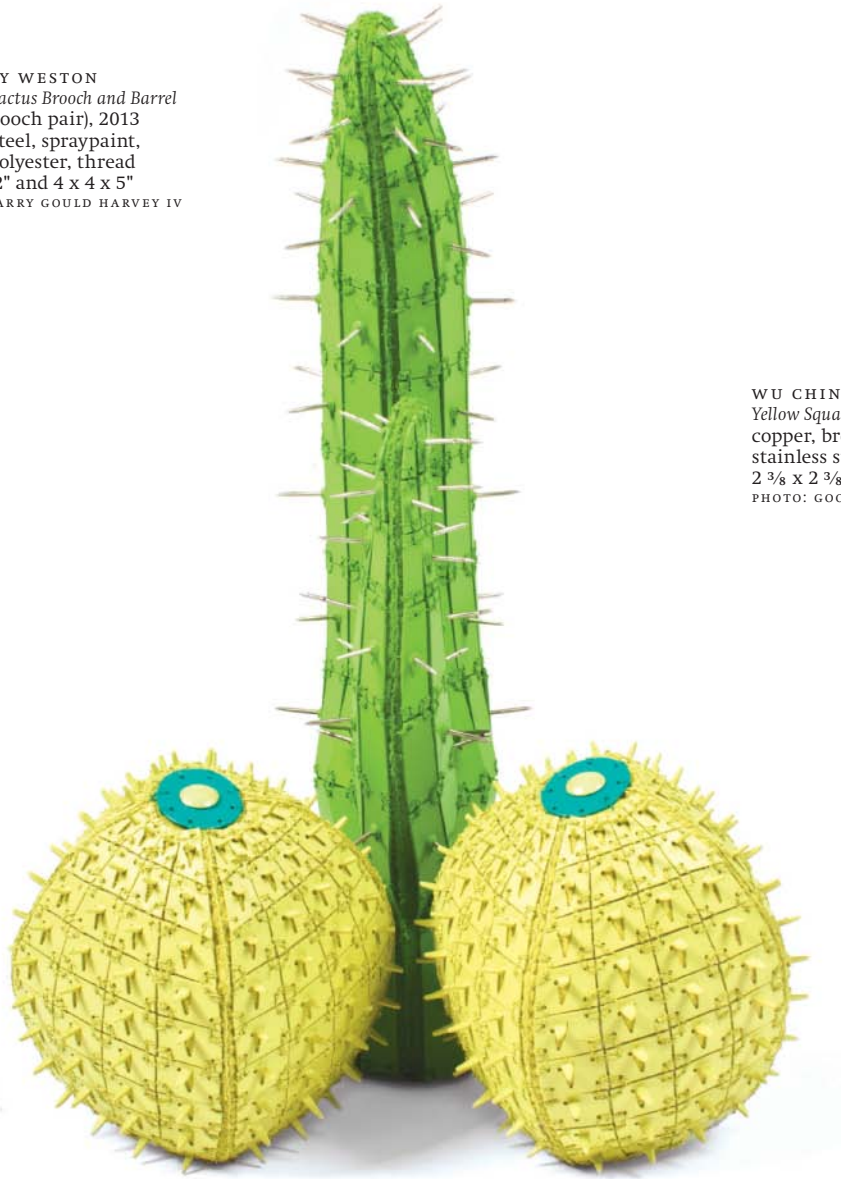
So please, everyone: Be absurd, be ridiculous, be obsessive, but don't be boring.

Jillian Moore is a maker and writer based in Iowa City.

NICK MULLINS
Tiger, 2015
wood, paint, copper
13 x 5 x 3"
PHOTO: NICK MULLINS

SAM MITCHELL
Chicken Little Brooch, 2015
brass, steel, rubber cord, powder coat
3 ½ x 6 x ½"
PHOTO: SAM MITCHELL

SEULGI KWON
Happy Bird (ring), 2014
silicone, pigment, thread



MALLORY WESTON
Saguaro Cactus Brooch and Barrel Cactus (brooch pair), 2013
copper, steel, spraypaint, cotton, polyester, thread
10 x 3 x 2" and 4 x 4 x 5"
PHOTO: HARRY GOULD HARVEY IV

WU CHING CHIH
Yellow Square (brooch), 2013
copper, bronze, enamel, stainless steel
2 3/8 x 2 3/8 x 2 3/8"
PHOTO: GOOD PHOTO STUDIO

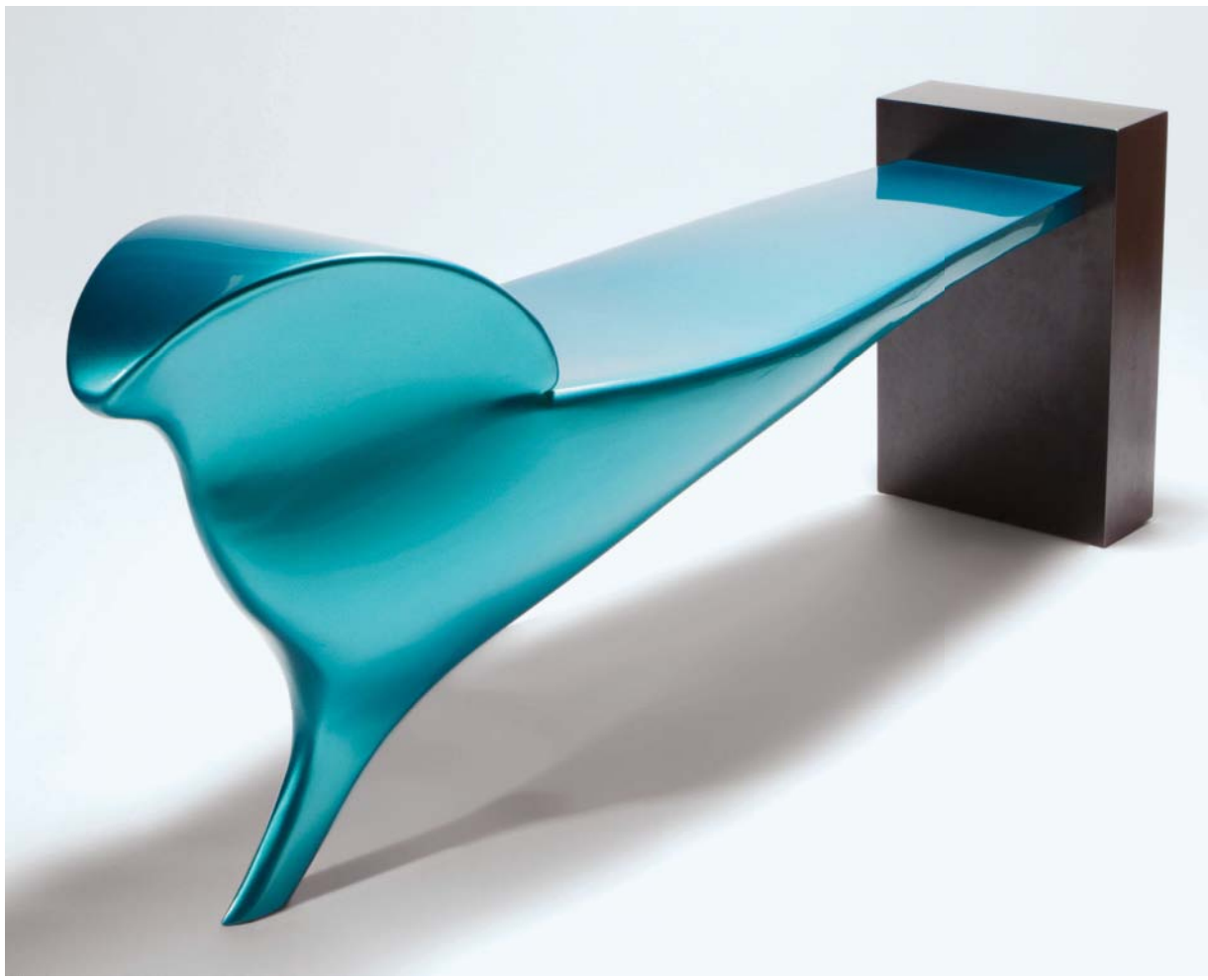
DENISE JULIA REYTAN
True Colours (necklace), 2011
silver, amazonit, amethyst, turquoise, plastic, onyx, carneol, coral, feather, rope, rubber
16 ½ x 10 x 1 ¾"
PHOTO: T. WILLEMSTIJN

JAKI COFFEY
"Lust at Sea" (inflatable necklace), 2015
waterproof nylon, latex, reflective tape, pinch clamp, wadding, nylon strap, wire
approx. 10 x 21 ½ x ⅝"

FARAH AL-DUJAILI
A Different Species (necklace), 2013
copper, plastic, thread, plasti dip, beads, crayon, nail varnish, fabric paper
4 ¾ x 20 x 3 ⅛"
PHOTO: FARAH AL-DUJAILI

Vivian Beer

Anchored Candy no.4, 2011
steel, patina, automotive finish
60 x 21 x 25 ½"



Woman of Steel

BY PATRICIA HARRIS AND DAVID LYON

Anchored Candy no.8, 2015
steel, patina, automotive finish
79 ½ x 26 x 40"
COLLECTION OF CURRIER MUSEUM OF ART

Thunderhead, 2012
stainless steel
15 x 6 x 6'
COLLECTION OF
CITY OF CAMBRIDGE, MA

IT'S TEMPTING TO describe Vivian Beer as a modern-day Superman: "Faster than a speeding bullet, more powerful than a locomotive...." She's physically strong, highly animated, and her mind moves about a million miles an hour. But as she positions a piece of sheet steel in a hydraulic press to tease it into a curve so voluptuous that it would have made Pythagoras cross-eyed, Beer's hands are rock steady.

Perhaps not so coincidentally, Beer is obsessed with the design aesthetics of the same era as the original comic-book superheroes: the years bracketing World War II. She credits the Streamline design movement for inspiring much of her recent work.

"I fell in love with the Streamline trains of the 1930s," Beer says. "Then I started looking into the Streamline design movement and realized that a lot of that aesthetic was based on the advent of flight. There was a utopian excitement to the era, that everything was going to change—kind of like the digital revolution today. They have a lot of similarities. I wanted to put that exuberance into my work."

Beer came to furniture design circuitously. Born in Bar Harbor, Maine, she grew up in a village north of Ellsworth, where she learned to use a welding torch at quite a young age. "It's just one of those things you learn when you grow up there," she says. "When the bumper rusts off your car, you don't get a new car. You weld the bumper back on."

Beer earned her B.F.A. in sculpture from the Maine College of Art in Portland in 2000, thanks to a full scholarship from her high school. After a stint as a blacksmith in a craft education center, she entered Cranbrook Academy of Art in Michigan, where she studied metalsmithing with Gary Griffin and earned an M.F.A. in 2004. "Working with Gary, I learned that the decorative arts have a history, and that I could use the same research tools to understand them as I had in sculpture," she says. "I had made a few pieces of furniture up to that point, so I was familiar with functionality without realizing it."

Beer's approach to sculpture suddenly changed when she was invited to contribute to the Cranbrook Annual Chair Show. "I made a chair and I haven't stopped since," she says. "Once I deliberately made a piece, I thought, 'Wow—this

Current, 2004
steel, automotive finish
35 x 33 x 28"

Filled With Birds and Beasts-Slither.walk.fly, 2008
steel, automotive paint
95 x 45 ¾ x 38"
COLLECTION OF RENWICK GALLERY OF THE SMITHSONIAN

is *great*!'" And, she notes, it was hard not to be inspired at Cranbrook, where she was surrounded by "some of the best furniture that has ever been designed." Making furniture, Beer realized, was a subset of making sculpture, but with one distinct advantage. "I think of furniture as a stage set for interaction," she explains. People generally view sculpture from a distance. Even outdoor sculpture installations come with a psychological plinth that separates the pieces as "art." Furniture encourages a tactile experience that makes its artistry both more approachable and more intimate.

Some of Beer's early pieces of furniture—notably a 2004 green patio table and chair called *Current*—descend from some of the great Eames and Saarinen designs. The chair echoes the iconic pedestal of Saarinen's tulip pieces for Knoll, though Beer claims the form for herself by visually gathering bands of steel like a sheaf of grain cinched in the middle. The actual construction technique is more complex than the visual effect, since the steel bands also seem to flow seamlessly into the spiral cutouts of the base and top. The accompanying chair plays masterfully with positive and negative space, offering the illusion that it was cut from a single sheet of steel and was subjected to radical bends to create a spring-loaded seat curved to the body. The two pieces taken together have an extraordinary airiness that belies their construction from weighty enameled steel.

"I think of furniture as a stage set for interaction," Beer explains.

Even more delicate—at least in a visual sense—are some of Beer's public furniture pieces. Viewed on edge, the steel pieces look like two-dimensional line drawings. The curves are fabulously complex, and allow her almost to doodle in space. "I like to draw with my shoulder rather than with my wrists," Beer quips. "I love what scale can do for empathy. When a piece is on a human scale, you have a different reaction to it."

The whimsy of the public works makes them especially appealing. For example, *Thunderhead* (2012) was a park bench commission for Cambridge, Massachusetts. More than 30 feet long, the bench undulates along a paved portion of the park, anchored by seven posts. The park is a particularly

Bridge Bench, 2011
steel, rust patina, concrete
24 x 72 x 26"

Streamliner Bench, 2014
steel, automotive finish
64 x 16 x 19 ¾"

Ruffle Lounge, 2007
steel, automotive paint
57 x 21 ½ x 33"

Winded Orange, 2006
steel, patina, automotive paint
74 x 24 x 22"

popular space for skateboarders, so the bench gets roughed up as boarders jump on and off, using the curves as runways and launch ramps. "These are public art projects," says Beer. "I love that they're very social." She shrugs. "It's really getting beaten up. People do what they do. You have to be okay with it. You try to find a way to speak to the community, let it be something interesting, that lets people smile when they're walking by."

Such pieces belong to the two series that Beer calls "Line Abstracts" and "Ruffles." At their most whimsical, they can include the simple chair with a flowing train of metal strap squiggles she calls *Filled with Birds and Beasts: Slither.walk.fly*, or the elegant ribbon-candy bends of the sheet metal stool with a deep red enamel she calls *Ruffle Stool*. The compound curves and saturated enameling of these series make them simply luscious. Sitting on the pieces is even more of a surprise, since Beer is very careful to incorporate just enough of a dip and curve to comfortably accommodate buttocks. It is ironic that metal, while seeming stiff and cold, is actually a very malleable and adaptable furniture material. Not only does it take subtle curves, but it also supplies its own spring-loaded support for the body's weight.

"I'm always thinking about ergonomics," Beer says, "and how a piece makes you feel. If this is a stage set, then who are you?" *Ruffle Lounge* (2007), a two-piece chaise, is a transitional piece and proved one of the most difficult to make comfortable. "How you sit creates a different attitude," she notes. "Sitting up a little straighter makes you feel regal, like a queen." The chaise is definitely a beautifully constructed piece of eye candy. The matching curves are extremely complex, and they seem to ache for a third dimension, to give the undulating piece a solidity that would anchor its angles. Although it is all single-thickness steel, its shapes presage Beer's embrace of what can only be called a "fuselage" for some of her furniture, including the elongated wedge of *Winded Orange*.

"I'm always thinking about ergonomics," Beer says, "and how a piece makes you feel."

It was a natural next step for Beer to move from the dramatic curves of the "Ruffles" series into more volumetric pieces that realize her sensual vision in three dimensions.

Proving that inspiration can come from anywhere, Beer conceived the body and leg of a sensual, streamlined bench while regarding the short heel on Italian women's shoes from the 1940s. The genesis of the shape may be mid-20th century, but Beer happily embraced 21st-century technology to translate it to construction plans. She scanned a small model of the shoe heel, then used a CAD program to manipulate the form in three dimensions. Once she perfected the form, she sliced it up to create a template for the support structure and make patterns for the pieces of the skin.

Beer began with a single "heel" to support one end of a bench, while concluding the horizontal piece at a figurative wall—a rectangular block. Although her forms are invariably abstract, Beer enjoys playing with pop cultural references. Benches with high-heel curves are usually coated in a reflective, metallic paint of the sort used in customized hot rods. "I choose colors based on years and models of cars," Beer says. "I guess I sort of fell down the rabbit hole of car customization when I got hooked on compound curves." Candy-apple red is one of her favorites, though she is also partial to a very hot teal. She calls the series "Anchored Candy." They are "anchored" by the matte black block, and "candy" reflects the pop of hard candy colors in the paint choices. It's hard to see one of these benches and keep a straight face. Two-hipped versions of the benches may be the most complete realizations of the shoe-heel form. A seminal piece in the 2014 "Streamliner" series, a painted steel bench has an iconic presence and highly polished surface that almost screams "Do not touch."

By contrast, an earlier concrete version of the form, *Bridge Bench,* is very inviting, in part because Beer smoothed out the rough concrete surface. At the same time, she also ground and polished the surface to reveal the steel armature for the concrete castings, highlighting the bench as a piece of analytical sculpture. It is part of a series called "Infrastructure," in which pieces reveal how they are made.

Desert Impressions Bench no. 2, 2014
stainless steel, cast concrete
17 x 60 x 22"

That quick jump from comfort to concept pleases Beer immensely. "Furniture is such a rich territory," she says. "You can make something that could exist in a gallery as an intellectual object—or in someone's home. I tend to pursue a concept more like a sculptor than a furniture maker."

Beer likes to work with the combination of cast concrete on a steel armature. During a residency at San Diego State University, she was inspired by Southern California pop culture: both by the chassis of customized low-rider autos, and by the ape-hanger handlebars of custom motorcycles. The concrete-steel *Low Rider* chair pays homage to both—and less directly to the Eames Low Chair. "It's only 15 inches off the ground," Beer observes of the chair. "I learned that from the Eames. It is so low and it's very comfortable. I wanted you to feel like a badass when you sit in it." The chair's structure encourages the sitter to place his or her arms quite high, rather like sitting imperiously on a throne—or, alternately, to slouch in the structure. There is no way to sit in the chair without showing body-language "attitude." The *Low Rider* has been so popular that Beer has made a limited edition, each one individually crafted.

Self Portrait in Low Rider Lounge, 2013
formed and fabricated steel, rust patina and ferrocement(concrete)
48 x 41 x 34 ½"

Concrete also figures in a series that Beer calls "Desert Impressions." Inspired by a road trip to the deserts of the American West, the benches are actual castings of pieces of the desert floor. Beer uses short residencies or small grants to push her boundaries and experiment. The desert project, for example, was supported a John D. Minick Furniture Fellowship Grant. For these concrete benches, she built the steel side structure and then wrapped a urethane negative around it and poured the concrete. For a bronze bench in the same series, Beer took advantage of a residency at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, to use the school's foundry. "I spent a month casting a 300-pound bronze bench," she says. "With the bronze bench, I made a urethane positive and did a many-piece sand mold around it. I had done very little casting, so it was very new for me, very exciting."

Beer's interest in the Streamline design aesthetic led to a group of 2014-15 "Streamliner" pieces. In them, she realized the potential of the volumetric forms of "Anchored Candy" with full-figured furniture. The benches

Zephyr, 2014
aluminum, servo motor door mechanism, automotive finish
26 x 18 x 74"

"You can make something that could exist in a gallery as an intellectual object—or in someone's home."

maintain the polished surfaces but reflect the unadorned metal of the original Streamliner trains. Rendered in aluminum, her first case piece, a chest called *Zephyr*, has an otherworldly mien. It also hides a surprise: a servo motor that opens and closes the cabinet.

Beer's fascination with curves and aerodynamic design expressed in the "Streamliner" series led Beer to apply for a residency at the Smithsonian National Air & Space Museum. Beer not only received access to the museum's archives, she also went behind the scenes to the Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center, a companion facility to the museum located in suburban Virginia, where an entire hangar is devoted to restoration of historic aircraft and spacecraft. It was a gearhead's dream come true to discover the futuristic World War II-era "flying wing" airplane designs created both in Germany and the U.S. They never quite came to fruition because they were too hard to control until the advent of the computer.

"At the Smithsonian, I fell in love with engineering," Beer says. "It is applied science, just as functional work is applied art. In both cases, they are applied to people's needs. That was the missing link."

Beer was also inspired by gestures of design, like the stepped curves at the base of an amphibious plane that helped the fuselage break the suction of the water for liftoff. She was even more taken with the internal support structures that made the aerodynamic surfaces possible. If the residency had been a '40s comic book, it might have been titled "Woman of Steel Meets the Right Stuff." After concluding the Smithsonian residency and returning to her studio in an industrial building in Manchester, New Hampshire, Beer admitted, "I don't know yet, but I think the next year of my work is going to be about structure."

Patricia Harris and David Lyon are critics based in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Furthermore: www.vivianbeer.com

Hanna Hedman

Voyage to a New World

BY BELLA NEYMAN

North, 2014
reindeer fur, tree burl, birch, leather, textile, paint
38 ½ x 5 x 13"

North, 2014
reindeer fur, reindeer antler,
leather, brass, paint
22 x 16 ½ x 2 ⅜"

HANNA HEDMAN HAS lived many lives. For someone as young as she is, this spiritual artist thinks a lot about death. Even her jewelry, at first glance beautiful and rich, can seem eerie and morbid. This unusual juxtaposition is what makes this Swedish artist so interesting. Her work is an examination of her culture and the ensuing acknowledgment that there is more to the world than what she knows and what exists in her comfort zone. It is about opening the mind to the unfamiliar through conscious observation of other cultures and human behavior. It is about life and death. Like the work itself, there is more to Hedman than meets the eye.

Hedman's website opens with an image of a mask with hollow eyes and a large bloom placed strategically over its mouth. Several other blooms grow around the sides, with strands of leather flowing from the neck area. This copper and leather mask is from Hedman's "Black Bile" series (2013). Of this work, Hedman wrote, "Blossoming sentimental flowers that imitate still life paintings become preserved into metal. Desiccated leaves form a hand that wants to hold on to you or a mask to hide behind. The work represents a frozen moment of decay; a preserved dark beauty that derives from the struggle of good and evil. Light and darkness are contesting one another. The jewellery wants to be beautiful on one hand, but on the other hand haunting and not even jewellery at all." This description, although written about a particular body of work, is applicable to most of Hedman's art. Romantic, dark, and deep, Hedman's work is all about dichotomies: beauty and ugliness, sorrow and happiness, faith and faithlessness, light and dark, good and evil.

Hedman has been on a metaphorical and literal voyage from a young age, constantly searching for new inspiration.

Hedman has been on a metaphorical and literal voyage from a young age, constantly searching for new inspiration. Her studies have taken her to North America as well as Latin and Central America and New Zealand. The experience of making her first piece of jewelry while on a skiing scholarship at the University of Colorado was more significant than the piece itself, as it sparked a persistent desire to create, propelling Hedman to become a significant figure in the world of art jewelry.

From the beginning of her artistic career, Hedman has been guided by instructors who have encouraged her to experiment and find her own way. Al Carniff at the University of Colorado was her first metals instructor and let her "explore without many limitations or dos and

Human Tree, 2010
silver, copper, paint
19 5/8 x 13 x 2 3/8"

Human Tree, 2010
silver, copper, paint
21 5/8 x 3 3/8 x 6 1/2"

Human Tree, 2010
PHOTOGRAPHIC COLLABORATION WITH SANNA LINDBERG

don'ts," she says. After returning to Stockholm, where she was born and raised, Hedman enrolled at Konstfack University College of Arts, Crafts and Design and received her BA and MFA at Ädellab, the Department of Jewelry + Corpus (metalsmithing). Frederik Ingemansson, her first technical teacher at Konstfack, had a similar approach to Carniff's; although he was formally trained, he was not opposed to his students learning new techniques. Hedman spent her spare time in the Konstfack workshop. "I had little experience when I started at Konstfack, and I wanted to learn and had a lot of inspiration and energy," she says. For all the technical skill that she gained from Ingemansson, her appreciation for jewelry as art came from Ruudt Peters, the founder of Ädellab. According to Hedman, Peters "put much more emphasis on jewelry and experimenting with materials."

When the Dutch Peters joined the mainly Swedish Konstfack faculty, students were immersed in traditional coursework. "The rare request of all of my students to become more personal and emotional was a strange invitation in the formal and cold Swedish society," Peters says. "Hanna saw her chance to break through." For Hedman, this was a welcome challenge, as she questioned Swedish societal norms and the way that people suppressed their feelings and emotions.

Black Bile, 2013
silver, leather, copper, paint
17 x 10 ¼ x 4 ¾"

Distraught over a painful personal experience, Hedman was encouraged by her professors to pour those feelings into her final project. According to Peters, "her examination work was her complete breakthrough." The series featured floor-length necklaces, some with claw pendants, which appeared to take a physical toll on wearers, along with open envelope-like brooches that could not contain their thorny contents. The ability to turn raw emotions, primarily sadness, into art is Hedman's signature. Peters asserts, "The great thing is that Hanna was/is always able to make her work universal and understood by others. … Hanna has a great quality to transform her personal life into art." Hedman once said that her final project, *Enough tears to cry for two* (2008), is one of her most satisfying because of "the strength that it took from me to create that work."

Hedman was still a student when she began exhibiting at Ornamentum Gallery in Hudson, New York; she was introduced to the gallerists Stefan and Laura Friedman by Peters. "A number of artists during that period, mainly from Scandinavia, were using natural, almost tribal materials, and were approaching it in a very similar manner (including in some of Hanna's earlier student work)," says Stefan Freidman. "Hanna was able to leave the natural, tribal feeling behind and refine the work just enough to keep it raw but balanced with a delicacy in silver or other materials like fabric." Hedman spent an exchange semester in New Zealand and worked with fish scales native to the area, creating works with a rhythmic surface like the Norwegian artist Tone Vigeland, but in a completely different manner.

Hedman enjoys working with her hands and is drawn to metal. She talks about being "aggressive" with it, holding the metal in her hands and cutting or drilling into it. Her current studio on the island of Södermalm in Stockholm belonged to a retired 80-year-old metalsmith who left behind his tools. Knowing that the tools she now handles have lived a long life is of great importance to Hedman. The artist's work is inspired by traditional jewelrymaking techniques that she does not always use in a conventional way. Instead of making filigree, Hedman drills numerous holes into the metal or solders together wires that resemble small filigree. The jewelry is full of repetitive decorative elements such as overlapping flowers, scales, and, sometimes, body parts. Hedman finds that the repetition in her work puts her in a "meditative state." A perfectionist, she prefers to work in series, often making more than one piece at a time, crafting fragments and then revisiting the composition.

Hedman's most recent body of work, "North" (2015), signals an expansion of her vocabulary of materials. She opts for materials that have a "real identity" and a known origin. The pieces in this series include reindeer fur, antlers, and tree burl. Introducing new materials also means learning to use new tools. "I am trying to find materials that relocate to the beginning of their creation. With the fur, I know where it came from and how the reindeer used to live. It is the same with the antlers. [I am] thinking about different

While They Await Extinction, 2011
"Manis tricuspis" (brooch/object)
silver, copper, paint
6 ⅜ x 3 ½ x 6 ¼"

While They Await Extinction, 2011
"Atelopus varius" (necklace)
silver, copper, paint
11 ¾ x 2 ¾ x 5 ⅞"

materials and going to the north and finding materials that come from my own country. These transitions are necessary but scary," the artist confides. "North" took the artist to northern Scandinavia, where she found inspiration in her own homeland. This has not always been the case and for the last five years, beginning with her 2010 "Human Tree" series, Hedman has sought creative impetus in other lands.

The "Human Tree" series, comprised of nine pieces of jewelry, grew out of Hedman's travels to Mexico City through the "Walking the Grey Area" symposium, organized by the Otro Diseño Foundation for Cultural Cooperation and Development. It was during this trip that Hedman became interested in amulets and *milagros,* small folk charms found in churches that are believed to have healing powers. An intense fascination with Mexico grew out of the artist's desire to understand a culture so dissimilar to her own. Hedman was surprised by the region's graphic representation of Christ's bloody body on the cross, the complete opposite of his sterile depiction within Swedish Lutheran churches.

The ability to turn raw emotions, primarily sadness, into art is Hedman's signature.

Guided by an interest in syncretism (the merging of different religions and cultures into one), Hedman visited several churches and spoke with numerous individuals about the cultures of the indigenous Mesoamericans and the Spanish Catholics. Hedman immortalized her trip by creating her own *milagros* in metal, which found their way into the nine neckpieces. Each is a panoply of forms; strung together by perforated metal links are dismembered arms, legs, lungs, and kidneys, akin to *milagros* seen in the Mexican churches. The work is also predominantly red. Hedman tried to "mimic the red colors of the volcanic city, as well as the fleshy colors of the representation of Jesus," she says. Red symbolizes Mexico in the artist's mind, and has since become her favorite color.

"While they Await Extinction" (2011), the body of work that followed "Human Tree," once again explores the life and death cycle, this time within the confines of the animal kingdom. "Humans often have a romantic idea of the natural world and the relationship we have with it, but in reality we are in conflict with nature by having a major negative impact on biodiversity. Our destructive behavior negatively affects the environment and ultimately ourselves," Hedman says. Using the same formal language, birds and fish are born from thin perforated sheets of copper and are melded together to become unified. It is often hard to decipher where one species begins and the other ends. Sometimes they are tangled in leaves. The flora and fauna represented in Hedman's version of *memento mori* jewelry are extinct, or close to it. Wearing these

Black Bile, 2013
silver, copper
and paint
13 x 11 x 2"

Calavera, 2013
leather, silver, paint
20 x 9 x 1 ⅛"

An artist obsessed with ancient talismans, Hedman has mastered the talisman for the 21st century.

pieces on the body is a constant reminder of the harm that we are causing the Earth.

In 2013, Hedman debuted "Black Bile" at Platina gallery in Stockholm. This series was the culmination of years of research. The title "black bile" is the literal translation of the Greek word for "melancholy," which she experienced while making this jewelry. Hedman explains the series: "All around is beauty, but a lingering bleakness is pulling downward." Characteristically, Hedman is enthralled by life and death, beauty and ugliness. Skulls and flowers make up a large part of this work. Hedman explains that these symbols "are a nod to traditional *vanitas* still life paintings." She encourages us to behold the surface beauty in her work, and upon closer inspection become aware of a lurking darkness; skulls with hollow gazes mixing with the blooms, or dismembered fingers poking out from a blanket of leaves.

Hedman's jewelry is at once colorful and devoid of color. The work is usually monochrome: either green, red, or brown with blackish-brown patina. Each piece is powdercoated and handpainted using spray paint and paint applied by hand with a brush, and the silver is oxidized. The layers are applied in stages because it helps the artist create shadows. "I prefer surfaces that are not shiny, as I want to create 'timeless' objects that are a dialogue between past, present and parallel worlds," she says.

In 2013 Hedman was invited back to Latin America, and completed a series of three necklaces called "Calavera." Once more, the artist enlisted contemporary techniques while pursuing her interests in syncretism, indigenous objects, and in 18th-century *momento mori* jewelry. The title *Calavera* refers to the skull's prominent role in Latin American history since the pre-Columbian era. Not coincidentally, Hedman's skulls with flowers are similar to the colorful, floral *calaveras* that are gifted to children on the *Dia de los muertos.* The three necklaces, some in red, borrow from the same formal language as "Black Bile": large skulls are decorated with oxidized flowers and leather strands hang from thick, worn leather strap.

An artist obsessed with ancient talismans, Hedman has mastered the talisman for the 21st century. Like the historical pieces that inspire her, Hedman's large jewelry has the ability to give the wearer power. She seeks to expand the public's understanding of jewelry and considers each piece's wearability, with the body as her starting point. Hedman also says that she uses materials that merge with the body's shape and contours. But she concedes that her large pieces, in between a necklace and armor, may be reserved for special occasions.

In the upcoming year, Hedman will bring to fruition a number of diverse projects. The artist will publish a book titled *Murmuring* with Sanna Lindeberg, her photographer since 2008. Lindeberg's photographs are much more than

Black Bile (brooch), 2013
silver, leather, copper,
steel, paint
13 ¾ x 2 ¾ x 5 ½"

Calavera, 2013
leather, copper,
silver, paint
13 x 6 ¾ x 1 ⅛"

just a record of jewelry on a body. The photographer and jeweler enjoy showing how a piece becomes transformed when it is worn by a man, or a young boy. The subjects in the photos are ordinary people, not models, but they are always beautiful and slightly mysterious. "In some cases the people are extraordinary looking, but in others they simply have a watchfulness or self-possession that prompts the viewer to imagine an alternative universe," Hedman says. Hedman herself has served as a model for many of the photographs. "The portraits of me are a way of playing with this alternate universe that surrounds my work and to position myself inside of that world that I am trying to create,"

Hedman has also undertaken several public commissions around the city of Stockholm. *Med Risk AttFörsvinna (At Risk of Disappearing),* a two-year project that began in 2014, is reminiscent of "While they Await Extinction." In conjunction with Stockholm Konst and the construction company Sisab, Hedman created fences that will surround preschools near Stockholm to educate children about the loss of biodiversity in Sweden. As a new mother, Hedman is interested in using her art as a medium for educating young minds about the preciousness of life. In addition, as an affirmation of Hedman's international reputation, the Art Jewelry Forum, a global non-for-profit art jewelry organization, has asked Hedman to design their 2016 supporter pin.

Hedman is constantly engaged with the world around her. She has been a follower of the Swedish radio podcast *Människanochmaskinen (The man and the machine),* hosted by Per Johansson, a neo-Socratic philosopher with a Ph.D in human ecology. Hedman says that Johansson's views on history and our past have greatly influenced her work, so much so that she asked him to contribute an essay to *Murmuring.* Johansson has since become familiar with Hedman's work and persona. "Hanna is soft-spoken. Her manner is mild. Meeting her casually you would never expect the wild things manifested in her art," says Johansson. "In an often quite stunning way she allows the creeping and crawling things to emerge out into the open, in places where, usually, quite different adornments are expected. What is more, they break all reasonable bounds. As a result you wake up. You become conscious of what was hidden away underneath the geometric cosmetics of our technological society. And you are confronted with an option. Either shy away and go back to sleep. Or remain conscious, present in your breathing, sweating body, and start to wonder..."

Bella Neyman is a New York–based gallery director, curator, and journalist.

Furthermore: www.hannahedman.com

Sublime Labor

Sephimera (brooch), 2010
stainless steel, powdercoated
5 ½ x 2 ¾ x 2"

Jewelry by Mirjam Hiller

BY KATJA TOPORSKI

Atrosanea Green (brooch), 2012
stainless steel, powdercoated
7 x 5 ⅞ x 2 ⅜"

THE EXPERIENCE OF Mirjam Hiller's artist lecture at the SNAG conference in Minneapolis in May 2014 has far outlasted her hour at the podium. With her words, she took the audience on a tranquil tour of the artist's mind, to witness the time-consuming process of making her 2012 piece *Atrosanea,* a brooch that is made of the sum total of 25,000 millimeters (1,000 inches!) of hand-cut metal. Starting with a sheet of bicolor powdercoated steel, Hiller pierced a most intricate pattern. After several days of work, she folded the metal into a wondrous three-dimensional form that nestles between manmade and natural, with its barrel-shaped buds and lamellar petals. Throughout this description she wove thoughts she might have had while working on *Atrosanea:* doubts, ideas for other pieces, finished or not, successful or not, a myriad of inspirations for the piece at hand, a carpet of experiences and emotions expressed in this single piece. Hiller's lecture was prepared and delivered with a focus and attention to detail similar to that of her artwork, leaving the audience with the impression that both originate from the same creative source.

Currently all of Hiller's work is stored in dozens of shallow cardboard boxes, in preparation for the move from her current location near Berlin to southern Germany. Each box contains a beautiful assembly of samples, experiments, and finished works from over the years. Some include small sketchbooks comprised of related images, drawings, and writings. Together they portray Hiller as a consummate jeweler who passionately explores complex processes as well as jewelry as a format; who obsessively investigates all its possibilities; who puts her life and soul into her making, striving for an enchantment that transcends technique.

100 Rings group, 2003
silver, colorit, synthetic gemstones
dimensions variable

After she began her jewelry retail apprenticeship in southern Germany in 1996, Hiller enrolled in a number of goldsmithing classes at the local vocational school. Finding much greater fulfillment in making rather than selling jewelry, Hiller was accepted at the College for Design of Jewelry, Objects, and Art in Pforzheim, Germany's traditional jewelry stronghold. The college affords equal emphasis to conventional jewelrymaking skills and conceptual development. Exploring the format of the ring, Hiller developed what she called *Wickelringe,* or wraparound rings, in which a bean- or seed-shaped top is attached to a brightly colored silicone string that can be wrapped and tied around a finger. While early versions had tops made from pearls, with the tiniest silver balls attached to their surface like a skin disease, these were later replaced with similarly organic forms in granulated silver, requiring a labor-intensive process more commonly associated with precise formal designs.

In search of the mystery inherent in archaic forms, Hiller explored the West African Ashanti method of casting, to which she was introduced by her professor Johanna Dahm. The primordial forms that were born from this pursuit of simplicity served as templates in the series

Die Gleichzeitigkeit des Anderen (necklace), 2005
copper, enamel, leather case
pendant 3 ¾ x 2 ⅜ x ⅝"

Sucker (necklace), 2005
copper, enamel, rock crystal beads
pendant 4 ¾ x 2 x ¾"

"100 Rings," a project led by guest lecturer Karl Fritsch. She created wax rings with low toppers that gradually evolve from the ring shanks, covered them entirely in granulation beads, and then cast them in silver. Some have an opening at the top, which may be filled with bright ceramic composite or serve as the setting for a gemstone; others have chunky prongs studded with granules clasping a gem. While these rings display all the components we expect from this format, with shank, settings and gems, Hiller's combination of organic form with granulation results in splendid objects of unexpected unease.

Hiller's combination of organic form with granulation results in splendid objects of unexpected unease.

After starting graduate school in the jewelry program of the University of Pforzheim in 2003, Hiller pursued the beaded necklace as a quintessential form, under the conceptual theme "the simultaneous existence of the other." Limitations inherent in the enameling process dictated part of her direction: *Die Gleichzeitigkeit des Anderen* consists of a strand of large oval metal beads joining at an even larger oval pendant. In order to enamel her hollow, die-formed beads she had to avoid soldering the two halves together, as the solder would melt in the enameling kiln. Instead she cut rough tabs from the flanges around the oval bead halves, and set one side to the other, serving as

Stapled (brooches), 2006
silver, copper, paper, steel, enamel
2 ¾ x 2 x 2"

both gem and its prong setting at the same time. The piece comes with its own leather pouch, on which an imprint of each bead is stitched to the next, the smooth hide hinting at another, darker form of its content's existence.

Evolving from the bead format, Hiller proceeded to flip some of the component halves inside out, their hollow side exposed and the rough tabs of their attachments framing a dark passage to the object's interior. All of these forms are covered in white enamel, another element with which Hiller illustrates the complexity hidden within simplicity—because white enamel is never just white. Striking a balance between control over her process and chance, Hiller allows the environment to get a say in the end result. Uneven thickness of the metal, differences in kiln temperature, and moisture in the air all lead to subtle shifts in hue and at times to cracking of the enamel. The resulting jewels may act as pendants to strands of small glass beads, be composed into complex beaded necklaces, or stand alone as a brooch: together they convene as the notes to a symphony in off-white.

Striking a balance between control over her process and chance, Hiller allows the environment to get a say in the end result.

While at graduate school, Hiller took a year to study at the Nova Scotia College for Art and Design in Halifax, Canada. Inspired by the haphazard way flyers were tacked to telephone poles, she developed a group of

puffball-shaped brooches. Small patches of silver appear tacked together from the outside into a simple ovoid form. On the inside, however, the ends of the staples point straight into the center, like a hedgehog's spikes turned inward. These pieces speak of an intense vulnerability, where what could potentially act as a defense mechanism is hidden on the inside, while the outside is exposed as a fragmented shield, unlikely to hold up to much pressure.

The preparation for her thesis work in 2008 led to another bout of intense exploration of a process, this time electroforming. Hiller's interest did not lie in covering a form in a layer of metal, but in taking the process to the limits of fragility. Inspired by traditional material sources for jewelry, such as beads, corals, and crystals, Hiller painstakingly recreated complex crystal forms in wax and then enameled their electroformed shapes. Realizing that this combination of techniques was just impossible to control, Hiller arrived at the simple but laborious process she described so beautifully in her 2014 lecture. Her piece *Crystal* was pierced from a single flat sheet of titanium steel, each metal gem with tabs that were to become its facets, and then folded into a heap of treasure. Others in this group, such as *Staves Red,* were cut from steel sheet that had been powdercoated in bright industrial colors. Its pendant is comprised of angulated rods of red lacquer, showing the metallic edges that hint at the process underlying their creation. Single folded rods make up its chain. The contrast between the seemingly natural arrangement of the composition and its clearly manmade construction gives these pieces tension and also point to a topic inherent in all of Hiller's work: labor. "*Diese viele Arbeit!*" (All this work!) she exclaimed, more than once in our conversation. Hiller can easily spend an entire week just cutting out the complex pattern for a single brooch. In a beautiful book by and about Hermann Jünger titled *Ueber den Schmuck und das Machen (About Jewelry and About Making)* is a handwritten note in which Jünger likens the path to finding an artistic voice in the land of the imagination to a journey into an unknown country. On this journey the spectacular is the exception; it is more likely the slow changes of the familiar that constitute true discovery. Hiller's persistent quest for a new horizon in a skill as unassuming as piercing metal with a saw speaks in equal amounts to this slow journey as to the spectacular end result.

The same book contains an excerpt by the German designer Otl Aicher about the kind of knowledge that is unattainable by logical deduction alone, knowledge that can only be acquired by the actions of the hand. We can see this manual wisdom at work when we look at Hiller's brooch *Sephimera:* a heap of crimson-colored crystals with two metallic trumpet-shaped flowers espousing hundreds of feathery cuts. The many hours it takes to pierce a piece like *Sephimera* allows the idea for the next jewel to ripen in Hiller's mind, the design born of a knowledge that comes from the intensity of her interaction with the material. Sometimes these are not the results the artist has envisioned. The development of Hiller's "Moth" series brought about scores of completed pieces the artist discarded until eventually the beautiful

Crystal (brooch), 2008
stainless steel, black rhodanzized
5 7/8 x 4 3/8 x 2 3/8"

Staves Red (necklace), 2009
stainless steel,
powdercoated
pendant 4 3/4 x 3 1/8 x 2 1/8"

Oval (brooch), 2014
stainless steel, powdercoated
4 ⅛ x 4 ⅛ x 1"

Drumonia (brooch), 2009
stainless steel, powdercoated
4 ⅜ x 3 ½ x 1 ⅝"

Moth (brooch), 2014
stainless steel, powdercoated
9 ½ x 5 ⅛ x 3 ½"

Hiller never folds paper maquettes prior to cutting metal, relying solely on her intuition.

butterflies developed their wings and took flight into an entirely new direction.

Hiller's meditative way of working has precedence that is well documented in the fine arts, but it also exists within the field of jewelry, for example in the practice of Hiller's colleague and at times mentor Iris Bodemer. The concentration that goes into the making of a piece is important to both artists, the force that transmits an essence of their artistic intentions into the object. Hiller never folds paper maquettes prior to cutting metal, relying solely on her intuition. She claims that all of the energy of making has to flow into the final piece; none of it can be lost in making a model. This means that failure is a risk taken and embraced.

Two groups of work titled "Boulders" and "Ovals" evolved from Hiller's experimentation with electroforming. Like handmade chocolate pralines, a number of rough-formed balls are piled on top of one another. These hollow pieces are all about the surface: *Boulder Red,* for instance, is covered in bright, shiny enamel; others show the restrained elegance of gold plating, or display a dusty oxidized coating like charcoal. Their archaic forms reveal little of the challenges in their making, in which the uneven surface thickness resulted in unpredictable outcomes when enameling.

Hiller's most recent work can be viewed in a similar vein. Returning to the simplest of forms, the circle, Hiller forged large disks of powdercoated steel into shallow domes. This process thins out the coating and exposes part of the underlying layer, resulting in blemishes and subtle color changes. Their plain appearance only hints at their maker's focus, which can be compared to a Zen practitioner's drawing of the Enso circle: once forged, it is completed with all its inherent imperfections.

A visit to Hiller's gorgeously situated studio, in the old coach house of one of the regal buildings of Potsdam, just outside of Berlin, is a melancholy affair. Hiller has all but moved out. The smell of mold is pervasive, and parts of the concrete floor are torn up to repair past water damage. Only the walls display signs of the working life of Mirjam Hiller during the past seven years: they are covered in the remnant trophies of her work. Bench pegs, destroyed from hundreds of drill holes and precision piercings, are interspersed with the decals from the templates for her pieces, hundreds of hours of labor meticulously charted. Realizing their preciousness, Hiller takes them off the wall and carefully lays them in their own gray cardboard box, where perhaps they will serve as the beginning of a fresh series of enchanted jewels.

Katja Toporski, a Washington, D.C.–based jeweler and writer, teaches at Towson University in Maryland.

Furthermore: www.mirjamhiller.com

Boulder Red (brooch), 2008
copper, enamel, stainless steel
3 1/8 x 2 3/8 x 2"

Striking Out The First Women Studio Jewelers

BY ELYSE ZORN KARLIN

DORRIE NOSSITER
Circular Crescent Brooch, ca. 1930
sterling silver, 14k yellow gold, sapphire, diamond, pink tourmaline, moonstone, emerald
diameter 1 ¾"
COLLECTION OF INESE T. DRIEHAUS
PHOTO: JOHN A. FAIER,
© THE RICHARD H. DRIEHAUS MUSEUM

PHOEBE TRAQUAIR
"Aphrodite" Pendant, 1902
gold, enamel
2 3/8 x 1 1/2"
COLLECTION OF DOROTHY DRIEHAUS MELLIN
PHOTO: JOHN A. FAIER,
© THE RICHARD H. DRIEHAUS MUSEUM

MRS. PHILIP (CHARLOTTE) NEWMAN
Aquamarine Necklace (original box), ca. 1890
gold, pearl, aquamarine
pendant 2 5/8 x 4"
COLLECTION OF TEREZA M. M. DRIEHAUS
PHOTO: JOHN A. FAIER,
© THE RICHARD H. DRIEHAUS MUSEUM

UNKNOWN MAKER
Suffragist Colors Necklace, ca. 1900-1920
silver, amethyst, pearl, enamel
17 1/2 x 3 1/2"
PRIVATE COLLECTION
PHOTO: J. GOLD & CO.

TODAY WE TAKE it for granted that women are equally represented among the ranks of studio jewelers. But it was not always so. The history of female jewelers moving into the studio can be traced to a fairly precise moment in time: during the Arts & Crafts Movement, which had its roots in England in the 1890s and then spread to other parts of the United Kingdom and to the United States.

Influenced by designer and socialist William Morris in the second half of the 19th century, craftsmen railed against the poor-quality goods being turned out as a result of the ever-growing mechanization. Once the Industrial Revolution got under full steam, not only was the quality of goods produced inferior to handmade items, but the quality of design also deteriorated greatly. In addition, adults and children worked under inhumane factory conditions before legislation put an end to it.

An elite group of artists, looking back to earlier times when objects were made by individual craftsmen, not in factories, began to produce handmade goods for the home. Their goal was to elevate design, and to make objects that were affordable and available to anyone who desired them. However, it wasn't until the last decade of the 19th century that jewelry was created as part of the Arts & Crafts movement.

Arts & Crafts jewelry, from approximately the 1890s through 1920, is remarkable not only for its rejection of the use of machinery, but as the first incidence in the history of jewelrymaking that women artisans were credited under their own names. It is likely that previous to this time women may have helped in their husbands' shops, and even assumed the running of the family business if their husbands died. But it was not considered appropriate or socially acceptable for an upper-class woman to work at any job, including jewelrymaking.

In 1861 William Morris's London firm, Morris & Co., began to make table objects, rugs, fabrics, and embroideries for the home based on medieval and on naturalistic designs. At the same time, the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood of painters were working in London and creating quite a sensation in the art world. Several of its members were close friends of William Morris. The Brotherhood was founded in 1848 by Dante Gabriel Rossetti, William Holoman Hunt, and John Everett Millais. The trio was eventually joined by others who sought to reform current art through greater naturalism and a return to the detail, intense colors, and more intricate compositions of Quattrocento Italian art. Their naturalistic approach was in step with Morris's aesthetic and that of the Arts & Crafts movement in general.

Arts & Crafts jewelry was the original "art jewelry," designed to match the lightness and uniqueness of aesthetic clothing.

A common subject of Pre-Raphaelite paintings was the female figure with long, wild tresses, and soft flowing gowns inspired by Renaissance fashions. These dresses contrasted greatly

NELSON DAWSON AND EDITH DAWSON
Necklace, 1904
gold, star sapphire, blue enamel, chrysoberyl
pendant 5 x 4"
COLLECTION OF NEIL LANE
PHOTO: JOHN A. FAIER,
© THE RICHARD H. DRIEHAUS MUSEUM

with existing tight-fitting clothing of the Victorian era, which was made of heavy fabric and required a corset undergarment that hindered freedom of movement. The women in the circle of the Pre-Raphaelite painters—wives, lovers, daughters—adapted a similar style of dress as depicted in the paintings, which became known as "aesthetic clothing" and was worn by those in artistic circles. This style of dress waned by the 1870s but was revived with the Dress Reform movement towards the end of the century, which advocated that women abandon the corsets needed to achieve an hourglass figure (and in doing so, avoid the health problems associated with their wearing). It was during this later popularity of artistic dress that the need for jewelry to accessorize the clothing was recognized, and Arts & Crafts jewelry began to be made. Arts & Crafts jewelry was the original "art jewelry," designed to match the lightness and uniqueness of aesthetic clothing.

As Arts & Crafts jewelry proved popular, a number of artists in other mediums were drawn to the practice. For the first time, these were not only male artists but women as well. Up until the end of the 19th century, an upper-class woman's place was firmly in the home, running the household and taking care of the family. Having a job was considered unsuitable behavior. Only lower-class women worked at menial jobs because they had no choice. As a result of the Industrial Revolution, a *nouveau riche* middle class emerged and created a problem for Victorian society. Some women raised in the middle class were not marrying and therefore were not financially dependent on a husband, but had no family inheritance to sustain them.

JESSIE MARION KING
(ATTRIBUTED), FOR LIBERTY & CO.
Necklace, ca. 1905
gold, white enamel, chrysoberyl, peridot, green garnet, pearl, opal
pendant 2 x ⅞"
COLLECTION OF RICHARD H. DRIEHAUS
PHOTO: JOHN A. FAIER,
© THE RICHARD H. DRIEHAUS MUSEUM

How then to reconcile their financial situation as "destitute gentlewomen" with the impropriety of women from this class going to work? Gradually society found it acceptable for such women to produce decorative arts that could be pursued in one's own home, such as making jewelry andart embroidery.

In fact, as the Arts & Craft jewelry movement grew, a number of upper-class women underwrote the cost for classes for men and women to study metalsmithing, and several even learned to make jewelry themselves. One of the best known was Madeline Wyndham (Mrs. Percy), who was a member of "The Souls," an artistic and religious clique in the aristocracy, and a founder of the Royal School of Needlework in London. She studied enamelwork with the famed Arts & Crafts enamelist Alexander Fisher.

The first known female owner of a jewelry workshop outside the home was Mrs. Phillip Newman. She began her career at the South Kensington School in London in the early or mid 1860s, which in itself was very unusual. She was a pupil of and later assistant to the noted revivalist jeweler John Brogden. When Brogden died in 1884, Mrs. Newman continued as an artist-jeweler, the first woman to do so in London working under her own name. Her example influenced other women to believe that they too could make a career as a jewelry artist.

Mrs. Newman had exhibited with Brogden in Paris in 1867 and in 1878 when he was awarded the Legion d'Honneur. She had obtained the unique distinction of having been given a *medaille d'honneur* as a collaborator, which was unheard of for a woman. Her business card read

ELLA NAPER
Lily-Pad Hair Combs, ca. 1906
horn, moonstone
3 5/8 x 2 3/4"
COLLECTION OF RICHARD H. DRIEHAUS
PHOTO: JOHN A. FAIER,
© THE RICHARD H. DRIEHAUS MUSEUM

MAY PARTRIDGE
Flame Brooch, ca. 1900
silver, enamel
2 ½ x 2"
PRIVATE COLLECTION

"Mrs. Newman, Goldsmith and Court Jeweller, 10 Savile Row, London." Today most people still refer to her as "Mrs. Newman." Despite her trailblazing role as a jeweler, atthe time her identity was still also as a wife.

Charlotte Newman opened her own shop against all odds, hiring many of Brogden's assistants, and combined their craftsmanship with her own technical ability and flair. The resulting jewels, which were mostly executed on commission, are very individual in character. She specialized in reproduction jewelry of the "archaeological" or neo-Renaissance, working in gold and enamel.

The lack of training for the first generation allowed women to have an equal chance for success as the men.

A distinguishing feature of Newman's jewelry was that she very rarely produced two pieces that were the same. Although her style was not entirely in keeping with that of the Arts & Crafts jewelers, there is no doubt that Mrs. Newman helped gain acceptance for other women of the period to become metalsmiths.

The men who began to fabricate Arts & Crafts jewelry were by and large untrained jewelers. They were mostly architects, painters, and artists from other fields who found themselves attracted to metalwork and the fact that it was easier to sell. While the second generation of Arts & Crafts jewelers attended art schools and acquired metalsmithing skills, the lack of training for the first generation allowed women to have an equal chance for success as the men.

JULIA MUNSON FOR
LOUIS COMFORT TIFFANY
Gold and Enamel Necklace, ca. 1910
18k gold, pink sapphire,
plique-à-jour enamel
diameter 7 ½"
COLLECTION OF TIFFANY & CO. ARCHIVES
PHOTO: © TIFFANY & CO. ARCHIVES

In the movement's early days, Arts & Crafts jewelry was handmade from simple materials. Silver was the preferred metal, and sometimes base metals were used; semi-precious stones were cut en cabochon and were often joined by non-precious materials including abalone, coconut shell, and Connemara marble. The accessibility of inexpensive materials may have also helped women enter the field.

Arts & Crafts jewelry in general was simple in design, and the earlier pieces have a somewhat amateur look that is part of their charm. The metalwork was not sophisticated, often consisting of twisted wires and flaps of metal cut and folded back. Stones were mostly collet-set and pieces often featured an enamel as the central feature, with gemstones only as embellishments. Platinum and diamonds were never used (except for a commission), and such jewelry contrasted sharply with the Edwardian platinum and diamond pieces that predominated at the turn of the century and that would have been made entirely by male jewelers.

Another contributing factor to the success of Arts & Crafts jewelry was the concurrent birth of the Suffragist Movement. In 1867 the London Society for Women's Suffrage was formed, and in 1902 the more militant Women's Social and Political Union was founded by Emmeline Pankhurst and her daughters. It is known that a number of leaders in the Suffragist movement wore artistic

By 1900, many women jewelers working in the Arts & Crafts style were featuring their work in the movement's exhibitions.

jewelry and that several of the women Arts & Crafts jewelers made pieces specifically to support their cause. In particular, Ernestine Mills, a superb English enamelist working in the Arts & Crafts style and whose father supported the suffragists, made a number of important pieces for the Women's Social and Political Union. This jewelry included enamel party medals in the suffragette colors, brooches for its leaders, and an enameled pendant commemorating the release from Holloway Prison of suffragist Louise Mary Eates and others.

By 1900, many women jewelers working in the Arts & Crafts style were featuring their work in the movement's exhibitions. Even William Morris's daughter May, better known for her embroidery, exhibited with one of the guilds that was formed to help artists present their work to the public. There were also a number of important women jewelers who worked as a team with their husbands and shared the credit for the work. Nelson and Edith Dawson produced prolific amounts of enamel jewelry set in simple metal frames, featuring nature subjects, often flowers, depicted in their deep and opaque enamels. Arthur and Georgina Gaskin also executed copious amounts of jewelry, but with a more unique, sophisticated flair. Their easily recognizable silverwork featured intricate leaf patterns with multicolored collet-set stones. Others such as Kate Eadie and her husband Sidney Meteyard and Fred and May Partridge worked both alone and together on their various pieces. Ella Naper, one of Fred Partridge's students, also worked as his business partner for a period and went on to create beautiful jewels made of horn and moonstones in a style similar to Partridge.

The Arts & Crafts style spread throughout the United Kingdom, becoming firmly rooted in Scotland, Ireland, Australia and New Zealand. Artists from these countries often visited England and studied with English jewelers and enamelers, making it difficult to distinguish their jewelry from their British counterparts. Of the jewelers from Scotland, where many women attended the Glasgow School of Art in the early 20th century, perhaps the best known is Jessie Marion King, who was also an important children's book illustrator. Phoebe Traquair, who was born in Ireland but spent most of her adult life in Scotland, was a brilliant artist of wall murals, embroideries, and enamel jewelry that is highly coveted today. Traquair was initially rejected for membership in the Royal Scottish Academy because she mixed the "lower level" decorative arts with fine art and was thus not considered a "serious" artist. Many years later she was made an honorary member.

There was also a second generation of women artists who worked in the Arts & Crafts style, and whose jewelry presages Art Deco. Among those who continued to work until the 1920s and even later, were Sibyl Dunlop, Dorrie Nossiter, and Amy Sandheim. Their works were all somewhat similar, heavily laden with multi-colored gemstones, some of which, unlike earlier Arts & Crafts pieces, may be faceted.

META OVERBECK FOR LOUIS COMFORT TIFFANY
Tourmaline Pendant Necklace, 1930-33
18k gold, pearl, yellow-green tourmaline, black onyx chalcedony
10 ½ x 1 ½ x ¾"
COLLECTION OF TIFFANY & CO. ARCHIVES
PHOTO: © TIFFANY & CO. ARCHIVES

MRS. W.H. (ELINOR) KLAPP
Brooch, ca. 1895-1914
carved moonstone, platinum
4 ½ x 1 x ½"
COLLECTION OF THE BRONSON FAMILY
PHOTO: FIRESTONE AND PARSON

THE KALO SHOP, CHICAGO
Necklace, 1900
gold, pearl
pendant 10 x 3"
COLLECTION OF NEIL LANE
PHOTO: JOHN A. FAIER,
© THE RICHARD H. DRIEHAUS MUSEUM

FLORENCE KOEHLER
Ring, ca. 1900
diamond, enamel, natural pearl, gold
1 ⅛ x 1"
COLLECTION OF NELSON RARITIES
PHOTO: JOHN A. FAIER,
© THE RICHARD H. DRIEHAUS MUSEUM

Arts & Crafts mania found its way to the United States via visitors from England espousing its ethics, and through *Studio Magazine,* which chronicled developments in the fine and decorative arts. Many of the artists in America who turned to the Arts & Crafts style were already trained as jewelers, so the technical level is somewhat better than in English pieces. Examples of this jewelry include pieces by Josephine Hartwell Shaw, and Margaret Rogers, both of whom lived in the Boston area. Boston was one of the major centers for Arts & Crafts jewelry (and for the movement in general), as well as New York and Chicago.

In New York, Louis Comfort Tiffany started producing his unique form of art jewelry featuring enamels and unusual gemstones in 1904. To his credit, he hired two women to run his jewelry workshop, first Julia Munson and then Meta Overbeck. Tiffany had previously worked with women, including Candace Miller, a textile designer in his firm, Associated Artists, and hired women to craft his stained glass lamps. But as "liberal" as he might have been for his time, the reason Julia Munson had to leave the firm was her impending marriage; Tiffany did not believe that married women should work. It is likely that Munson and Overbeck actually designed many of the beautiful pieces of jewelry attributed to Tiffany, as evidenced by some of the sketchbooks left behind. But the true extent of their output will probably never be fully known.

Chicago was teeming with Arts & Crafts artisans, and surprisingly, many women jewelers. By the early 1900s a great number of women in this city were actually making a living producing jewelry and home furnishings in the Arts & Crafts style, many of them trained at the School of the Art Institute

The Arts & Crafts movement, and the role that women played in it, provided the foundation for women to become studio jewelers.

of Chicago. Among the earliest success stories were Madeline Yale Wynne (whose father invented the Yale lock), Leonide C. Lavaron, Florence Koehler, Bessie Bennett, and Jessie M. Preston. Others like Elinor Evans Klapp began working later in life; she began to make jewelry in her early forties and was the only American woman to be represented under her own name in the Paris exhibition of 1900.

Best known is Clara Barck Welles, who founded the Kalo Shop (Greek for beautiful) in 1900 with several other women. Vowing to produce objects that were "beautiful, useful and enduring," they began by making leatherwork but quickly segued into handwrought jewelry. The firm grew under Welles's excellent business skills; she hired men as well as women, many of them skilled silversmiths. In an ironic turn of events, a number of the men (and women) went on to found their own successful metalsmithing shops after working at the female-run Kalo Shop. The firm was so successful it remained in business until the 1970s.

It should be mentioned that there were other jewelry art movements in Europe and Scandinavia contemporary to the Arts & Crafts Movement. In Germany and Austria the work was known as *jugendstil* (young style). Very few names of female jewelers working in Vienna are now known to scholars, and none to a general audience. The best-known *skonvirke* jewelers (Scandinavia) are men like Georg Jensen, but names of women jewelers are only found after considerable search. From the Art Nouveau movement, which was predominantly sited in France and Belgium, only one woman maker's name is known, leading us to believe there were no others of note. Elizabeth Bonte made horn pendants, which were easily affordable unlike most Art Nouveau jewelry. However, Art Nouveau often featured women as the *subject* of its jewelry, frequently naked and in fantastical imagery melded with insect wings or sporting a mermaid's tail. The reasons why women artists did not have a place in these art jewelry movements are complex. In France, conflicted attitudes towards women in general was a major factor, as was fear of women working and not procreating during a time of decreasing population. In addition, the apprenticeship system in jewelry did not readily allow participation by women.

We must conclude that the Arts & Crafts movement, and the role that women played in it, provided the foundation for women to become studio jewelers. This tradition expanded to other countries as the 20th century marched on. Women working today as art jewelers owe a debt of gratitude to those who came before them and established the right of women jewelers to have a studio of their own.

ELIZABETH BONTE
Pendant, ca. 1900
horn, silk, glass
2 ¾ x 3 ⅜"
PRIVATE COLLECTION

Elyse Zorn Karlin is a freelance curator, author of several books on Arts & Crafts and Art Nouveau jewelry, and co-director of the Association for the Study of Jewelry & Related Arts (ASJRA).

Reviews

Vered Kaminski: Artificial Stones

Tel Aviv Museum of Art
September 6–
November 28, 2015

by Ursula Ilse-Neuman

Vered Kaminski, a noted jewelry artist and professor in the Department of Jewelry and Fashion Design at the Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design in Jerusalem, is one of a handful of women jewelers whose creative output brought international attention to Israel's art jewelry in the late 1970s. During a career that has spanned more than 30 years, her work has been exhibited worldwide, including several one-person shows in the United States. Last year, Kaminski won the prestigious Andy Prize for Contemporary Crafts, which offers each recipient a solo exhibition at the Tel Aviv Museum of Art, as well as an accompanying catalogue. The title of Kaminski's exhibition, "Artificial Stones," refers to only one of the artist's most recent series, and it came, therefore, as a welcome surprise that the nearly 900 works on display at the museum present a broad overview of the artist's oeuvre, with pieces dating from 1986 to the present.

Curator Maya Vinitsky laid out Kaminski's diverse, primarily non-figurative jewelry in eleven groupings across six huge canvases, the largest measuring more than forty feet in length. This design concept avoided the all-too-ubiquitous display cabinets by spreading the works asymmetrically, without regard to chronology. One's first impression of the installation is of an exhibition of very large paintings with subtly patterned surfaces. Intentionally or not, the installation suggests that jewelry can be viewed as art, albeit art that is built firmly on the maker's mastery of materials and techniques. Kaminski's necklaces, bracelets, rings, and earrings—as well as her working models—are outspoken about the process of object-making and hand-crafting, and are grounded in a deep understanding and mastery of the essence of the nonprecious and precious materials she uses.

Much of the stone jewelry on display is organized into clusters that rise above the off-white canvas backgrounds like outcroppings in a desert landscape. In contrast, the artist's finely wrought metal jewelry is arranged linearly, like field specimens collected for their variations in complexity and intricacy. This evocative arrangement of the works is altogether fitting, because Kaminski, like Israel itself, extracts life from the natural and manmade materials of the land around her.

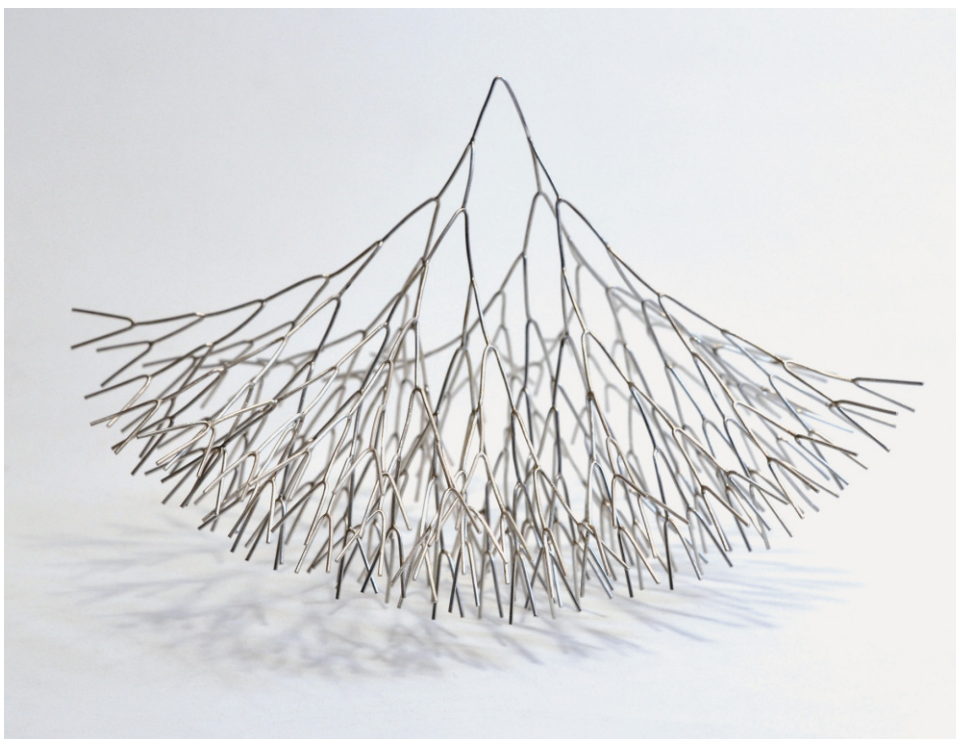
Four sections of the exhibition are devoted to stones—"Natural Stones," "Fissured Stones," "Artificial Stones," and "Sand in a Bottle." "Natural Stones," the largest and perhaps best known of the stones sections, includes jewelry containing common unpolished stones that the artist has collected from various sites in Israel and other places that hold symbolic meaning for her. Silver and occasional gold wires provide vital connecting and formal elements that reveal the laborious and exacting handwork that goes into these pieces. The subtle colors of the unaltered stones, including lapis lazuli, turquoise, and Jerusalem stone, the city's famous limestone, suggest the atmosphere of specific places and times. They constitute some of Kaminski's most striking works and, indeed, are the creations that have gained her international renown.

In "Fissured Stones" one sees the results of Kaminski's experiments in splitting apart natural stones, as well as "artificial" stones made of concrete, to reveal the hidden layers within that relate to the history of their formation. The most interesting discoveries are symmetrical patterns in the shape of butterfly wings, which the artist has carefully worked into arresting brooches and pendants.

"Artificial Stones" concentrates solely on works from 2006 to 2015, in which concrete substitutes for natural stone and casting in metal molds replaces quarrying and stone carving. Several of the cement–with–pigment–based brooches resemble pottery shards and feature subtly pigmented narratives that range from dancing girls to desert landscapes.

In addition to the sections given over to stones, Kaminski's lifelong fascination with the aesthetic properties and creative potential in metals is well represented through thematic groupings. In "Mosaic Loops," undulating lines turn back on themselves, creating black and white surface

Model from "Branching" series, 1999
sterling silver
3 ¼ x 5 ⅛ x 5 ⅛"



Brooch, 2010
silver, turquoise
diameter 2 ⅛"
PRESENTED BY ISRAEL TO
GERMAN CHANCELLOR ANGELA MERKEL

areas, while the pieces in "Metal Mosaics" consist of silver and stainless steel parts that are welded together. "Spaceframes" features netlike structures, each of which consists of several wires that are joined at strategically planned intersections and then run off in different directions. Standing out in her "Mobiles" section are delicately balanced earrings resembling scales, in which the weight of each small stone is doubled at each structural level. The intricately woven bracelets and pendants in the "Wire Loops" section incorporate abstracted figurative elements—a female torso or a head with braided hair, for example, which seem to emerge naturally from the weaving process.

For pieces in the "Nets" section, Kaminski works without solder to interweave metal wires into fence patterns like those that commonly surround and protect territory, creating pieces that are conceived as talismans that provide the wearer symbolic protection. This interest in rectilinear or organic ornamental designs can be traced back to the artist's research into the formal components of Paris's fences, lattices, and gates when she was studying for her master's degree at the University of Paris VIII. These investigations later inspired her creation of jewelry using patterns of knotted, looped, and woven structures, often in layers and mostly in silver, but also in combination with brass, copper, stainless steel, titanium, and occasionally gold. Kaminski acknowledges, as well, her admiration for Islamic decorative designs and welcomes their rhythmic, meditative qualities into her own work as a means of connecting with her Arab neighbors.

In the "Branching" section, Kaminski explores the phenomena of division and fusion in nature. She approaches her metal composition with mathematical precision, yet succeeds in creating surprising and lively visual effects.

From its humble, hands-on beginnings, Kaminski's creative process culminates in a sophisticated body of work that is meticulously executed yet playful at the same time.

Ursula Ilse-Neuman is Consulting Jewelry Curator at the Museum of Arts and Design, New York.

Ted Noten: Non Zone

Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam
June 19–October 18, 2015

by Liesbeth den Besten

For his recent exhibition, Ted Noten unveiled his *Tower of Babel,* only a few museum rooms away from the famous 16th-century painting of the same name by Pieter Bruegel. Noten's tower, 7.5 meters tall, is built from the contents of his studio. It is a beautiful structure that balances chaos and order in a subtle way. Noten emptied his entire studio in order to create a tabula rasa. To him, Bruegel's painting represents the ambition and impossibility of artists to reach for the utmost, for the unattainable. According to Noten, the empty studio is like "a parallel world, where nothing has to come from." But during the exhibition, the artist reported daily via e-mail from his empty studio—short messages, photos, drawings and observations, which were hung on the inside of the tower—in an apparent need to manifest himself.

Before nearing the tower, the visitor stumbled across a huge sandbox that filled an entire museum room.

Tower of Babel, 2015
mixed media (Ted Noten's studio contents)
height 24 ½'

In the box, an electric remote-controlled front loader moved a large heap of sand from one corner to the other. It reflects the work of the artist, Noten states, the pointlessness of what the artist is doing. Yet artists need this process: "As an artist, you have to do many useless things to get to deeper art. You need certain emptiness; the word 'output' that is now so in vogue in discussions about art, doesn't work. You need more aimless moments to get somewhere." The third room is Noten's *Treasure Room,* with three showcases filled with 3D-printed scale copies in yellow paper of some 30 iconic Noten pieces. These mainly one-off copies question issues of originality, reproduction, and copy, and society's demand that artists should make new work time and again.

The catalogue is entitled *Ted Noten Ubiquist,* a new phrase coined by art writer Jennifer Allen, denoting "a species that's not linked to one habitat but thrives in many." It is a nice characterization; it sounds like a movie title: *Terminator, Godzilla, Avatar, Ubiquist.* It is true that you can't pin this artist down; he doesn't seem to belong anywhere as he moves fluently between design, crafts, fashion, and art. But ubiquitous also means "common, everyday, familiar, ordinary, quotidian, usual," and these are qualifications that don't seem applicable to Noten, who is quite the contrary. The authors, Gert Staal and Jennifer Allen, see their protagonist as a hero who tries to escape from jewelry, which is a misconception because jewelry is at the heart of his work. Luckily the book has more to offer: by illuminating Noten's work through four different lenses—the cube, the stage, the square, and the market.

At the end of the exhibition, Noten dismantled his *Tower of Babel* by generously inviting students to come and take tools from his installation. The rest of the items were sold and auctioned on the spot; he didn't want them returned to his studio. Noten has decided to keep his non-zone, to extend the emptiness and to let it all happen. He is dashing away from the burden of history, and the dictates of his machines, tools, furniture, and the market. Some artists go on continuously; others have to deal with obstacles, blank spaces in their mind, and creativity. Some years ago Noten faced the same. He took the train from Tokyo to China and Russia, and it resulted in a new body of work, the *Global Tactile Pieces 2.* It was an unexpected harvest. Says Noten: "Now I want to open up myself again; it's pure luxury." He refrains from thinking in terms of output, profit, or planning, and says, "I hope to inspire others to start thinking as well."

Amsterdam-based Liesbeth den Besten is an independent art historian, writer, curator, and teacher.

Treasure Room, 2015
yellow paper copies
dimensions variable

Hungarian Treasure: Silver from the Nicolas M. Salgo Collection

Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City
April 6–October 25, 2015

by Rosanne Raab

Hungarian strudel and goulash are a gourmand's delight, but surpassing these treats is the Nicolas M. Salgo Collection of silver, gifted to The Metropolitan Museum of Art in 2010. The current exhibition highlights a wide range of fine and decorative arts from the region, notably rare chalices, beakers, traveling sets, and wine decanters. Curator Wolfram Koeppe, in the Department of European Sculpture and Decorative Arts, has included maps, selected textiles, and armor from the Met's collection to demonstrate the wide-ranging influence of regional styles on silver fabricated in Hungary between the 15th and late 18th centuries.

Hungary, Slovakia, and Romania were settled in the 11th century by Finno-Ugric people from the far northern Baltic region and from the forest steppes east of the Ural Mountains. The territory offered a strong economy, secured by rich deposits of salt, copper, silver, and gold. Skilled artisans, "Saxons" from Luxembourg, Flanders, and Westphalia, established goldsmithing workshops near the mineral deposits during the 13th century. Political and economic unrest in the 16th century disrupted working conditions in Buda and the surrounding area; artisans sought a more stable environment in Royal Hungary and Transylvania.

Salgo (1914–2005), a Hungarian native and United States ambassador to that country in the 1980s,

Chalice, 1462
gilded silver, filigree enamel, pearls
8 ½ x 5 ½"

Footed Beaker, late 1500s
silver, partly gilded
height 9 ⅞"

assembled a treasure box of opulent objects that originated in collections commissioned by an aristocracy with a taste for lavish displays of silver and gifts of friendship, neighborly respect, and diplomacy. A highlight is a rare Gothic *Chalice* (1462), maker unknown, adorned with spiraling filigree wires in floral patterns that embrace brightly hued, translucent enamel glazes. The originality of the design is identified as *modo transilvano,* or Transylvania style. Gilded silver and pearls contribute to its luxe beauty.

The Ottoman Empire often invaded and ruled the region. There is strong evidence of its cultural influence, such as the oriental-inspired stylized arabesque scrollwork etched and engraved on the surface of trumpet-shaped silver beakers and communion cups. Well-traveled Hungarian artists and artisans embarked on the Grand Tour to Vienna, Venice, Nuremberg, and Paris, where they sourced new designs for their clients. Amongst the many drinking vessels inspired by their diverse travels is a finely engraved *Footed Beaker* (late 16th century), with a "perspiration pattern" associated with Christ's tortured body during the Passion. The drops also suggest the effect of condensation when the vessel is filled with cold liquid. *Wine Decanter* (ca. 1780) marked SPC (Simon Petrus Conrad), with its swanlike neck and a biblical snake slithering up the handle toward the mulled wine, appealed to the indigenous taste of both church and secular patrons.

Eight silver dishes (1696), part of an original set of fourteen from the Andrassy Treasure, were commissioned for a wedding celebration. Each dish, with a broad framed rim, bears an engraved laurel wreath encircling a coat of arms; each coat of arms has a slight variation that suggests that more than one artisan produced the set. Richly encrusted blossoms symbolize wishes for abundance throughout marriage and reflect a strong Baroque influence.

Ambassador Salgo favored leather-tooled traveling sets elaborately outfitted with knife, fork, spoon, egg holder, marrow spoon, beaker, and most importantly, a spice box. During the 17th and 18th centuries, wealthy citizens and royalty traveled with their own utensils, as a precaution against arsenic that might be mixed with salt or spices at an unfriendly table.

Several smaller objects, including a gilded silver belt (18th century) studded with pearls and garnets, silver table decorations in the form of peacocks (1787) with detachable heads that allow the birds to be used as drinking vessels, and a shell-shaped feeding bowl (1690) crafted with a pierced well that fed liquid nourishment to the sick, affirm the inventiveness of Hungarian silversmiths from the Gothic period to the Baroque period.

Rosanne Raab is a curator and writer specializing in craft and design.

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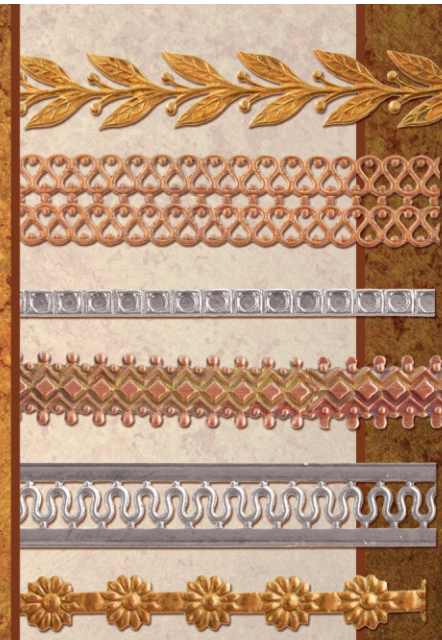

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From *Journey* – by Kristina Logan
photography by Dean Powell

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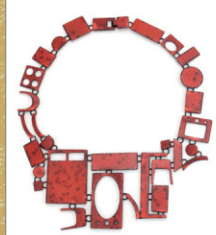

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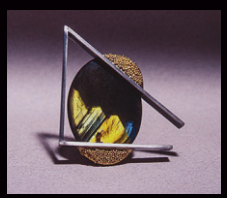

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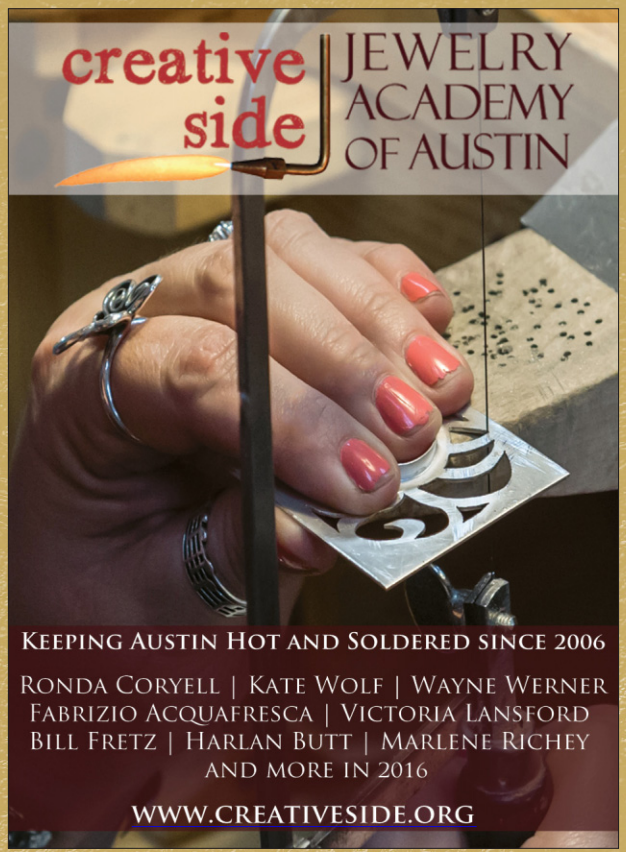
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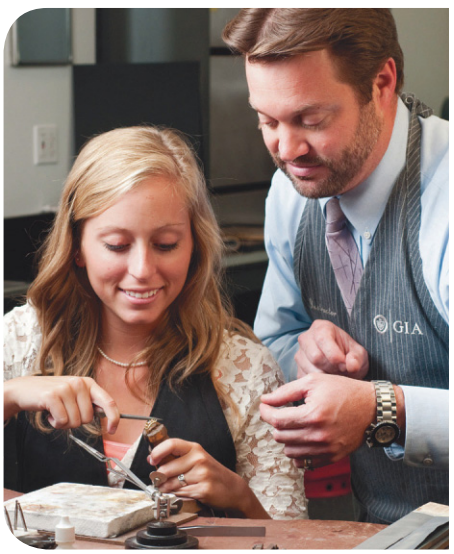

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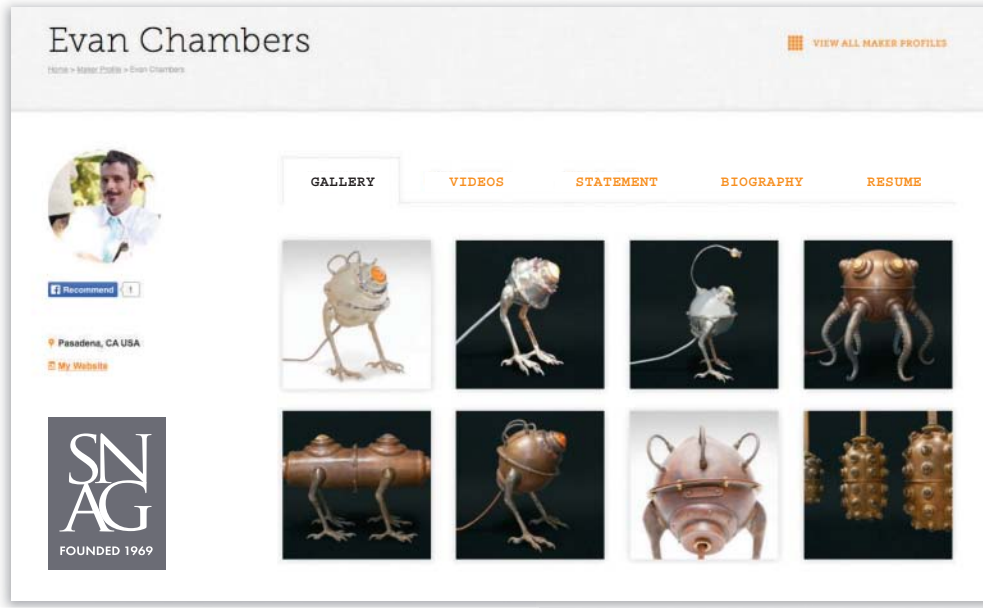

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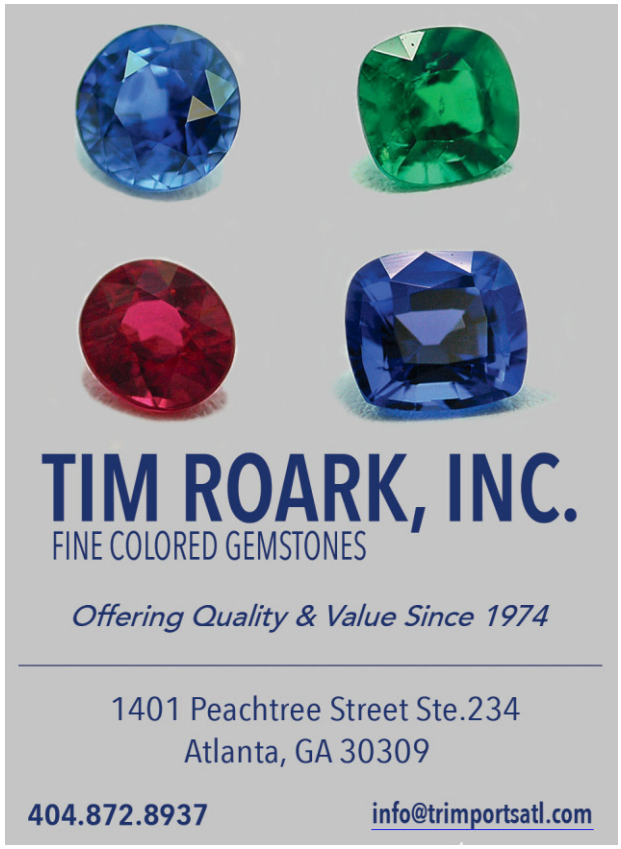

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